

Benjedid lambasts Gulf coalition

ALGIERS (AP) — President Chadli Benjedid said Wednesday that the multinational coalition fighting in the Gulf has transgressed the U.N. mandate, using the liberation of Kuwait "as a pretext to destroy Iraq." In a message to the nation, Mr. Benjedid came down firmly on the side of Iraq in the Gulf conflict. "Algeria is at the side of brother Iraq," he said. Mr. Benjedid revealed that before the start of the war, he made an unsuccessful effort to strike a "secret accord" with U.S. President George Bush in favour of an international peace conference on the Middle East. The Algerian leader had made trips to the Middle East and Europe in a vain search for a peace plan to avoid a conflict. The president also said he warned Iraqi President Saddam Hussein that the United States "will not allow their interests or those of Israel to be threatened." The message came at the opening of a special session of Algeria's parliament on the Gulf war. Algeria had called on Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait but was opposed to the constitution of a multinational force to resolve the crisis.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جورديان تيمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الراي

Hundreds of Saddams born in Jordan

AMMAN (AP) — At least 412 newborn babies in Jordan have been named "Saddam" in honour of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, the Civil Affairs Department said Wednesday. A senior official at the department, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the name, which was almost unheard of in Jordan before Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait, has been given to six per cent of all male babies born since then. "Many Jordanians have named their male babies Saddam in honour of President Saddam Hussein, who has become very popular among the masses who regard him as the Arab's hero," the official said. The name Saddam has become even more popular since the U.S.-led multinational force attacked Iraq last Thursday, with 22 baby boys given this name in the past five days, compared with the average of 17 per week in the wake of the Iraqi invasion, the official said.

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Iraq keeps up missile barrage

Scuds fired at Israeli and Saudi targets

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ TUESDAY kept up its missile attacks on Israel and Saudi Arabia and vowed a battle to the finish.

Senior American officials claimed the U.S.-led coalition against Iraq had gained control of the sky in the war theatre.

First reports indicated that one missile Iraq fired at Israel and another two at Saudi Arabia were downed by U.S.-made Patriot rockets.

Iraq also said it was suspending gasoline sales Wednesday as allied forces reported hits on major refineries. Iraqi radio called U.S. President George Bush a war criminal for ordering air raids on non-military targets.

Iraq hailed its own missile attacks on Israel. The latest strike, which injured at least 70 people in Tel Aviv, was carried out "for the sake of Palestine," Iraqi radio said.

Later, the radio broadcast a military communiqué reporting the capture of a downed British pilot (see story below) and reporting dozens of new Iraqi military and civilian deaths from more than 30 allied bombs and missile attacks.

The communiqué said eight Iraqi soldiers had been killed and 12 wounded in new attacks on military targets in Iraq and Kuwait. It reported the deaths of more than 60 civilians, including 13 killed when a downed plane plowed into four houses.

Iraq has now reported 39 military deaths and about 100 civilian deaths since the war started.

An army engineering corps officer was quoted by the Iraqi News Agency as saying 400 enemy missiles had been defused and many of them later fired back at the allied forces.

Iraqi radio branded Mr. Bush, French President Francois Mitterrand and British Prime Minister John Major war criminals. It said they had ordered their forces to bomb civilian factories, food and medicine warehouses, homes, mosques and churches.

Despite a week of aerial attacks, life in Baghdad has returned to relative normality, according to Cable News Network correspondent Peter Arnett, the only Western newsmen allowed to remain in the capital.

But hundreds of motorists lined up outside petrol stations Wednesday, the day the oil ministry announced fuel sales were being temporarily suspended across the country.

Reiterating that only a fraction of its three services had been used since the U.S.-led air offensive started one week ago, the Iraqi Defence Ministry said the forces held back under President Saddam Hussein's strategy would be used when the hour came.

"These forces are fully ready to explode the lava of their anger on the invaders, their henchmen and the Arab traitors in the region," the ministry newspaper Al Qadisiyah said.

"When the real fighting between men starts, shoots of God is great will reverberate over the battlefield and Iraq's army will take revenge on the U.S. scoundrels and all their invading allies."

Some military analysts have suggested the Iraqi strategy is to wait out the air attacks and try to inflict high casualties on allied ground troops when they start an offensive against Iraqi forces in Kuwait.

Al Qadisiyah said of the Iraqi fighter awaiting battle: "His only aim will be to kill the largest possible number of the invaders."

"The sand will turn into pools of blood for them to swim in, and their bodies will be scattered throughout the battlefield."

Baghdad has more than half a million people.

Israel says it will hit back at Iraq

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAEL'S KEY military and political leaders discussed details of retaliation for Iraqi missile attacks during an emergency meeting Wednesday. Defence Minister Moshe Arens said.

"The principle does not need to be discussed" Mr. Arens told Cable News Network (CNN) following a session shrouded in secrecy. "We have said all along that we would respond to the war directed against us."

"I suppose you won't be surprised if here and there in the cabinet meeting of course we discussed some of the details," Mr. Arens said.

Earlier, angry Israelis demanded their government retaliate against Iraq for a Scud missile attack that blasted a Tel Aviv neighbourhood, injuring at least 70. The army said three elderly people died of heart attacks.

While Israel's policy has been to strike back quickly and massively at any attacker, officials and other experts were questioning whether this would work in the midst of the Gulf war.

The missile, which hit Tuesday evening at the Tel Aviv area's 1.6 million people were resuming normal life, eluded the highly praised Patriot anti-missile batteries the United States rushed to Israel Saturday.

It hit a densely populated neighbourhood in the northern suburb of Ramat Gan.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir called the meeting of key cabinet ministers to discuss the most serious of the three Iraqi missile attacks on Israel since the Gulf war began a week ago.

Yossi Ben-Aharon, the director of the prime minister's office, expressed caution about Israel's ability to retaliate immediately, and said Israeli forces would have to coordinate with the U.S.-led military forces fighting Iraq.

"We aren't back in the day of retaliatory strikes," he said. "We must know how to act in a way to achieve our ends, and not just to tell ourselves and the public that we did something."

Former Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Israel also had to ask itself if its military forces could "make a significant strike at Iraq's ability to launch missiles." He said the government would have to answer the question.

Mr. Shamir also met Wednesday with U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, who brought a message of sympathy from U.S. President George Bush over Tuesday night's attack.

Mr. Shamir later called Bush. Israel Radio said. It gave no details of the conversation.

Mr. Eagleburger is here to coordinate policies between the two countries. He made a visit a week earlier to plead for Israeli restraint.

In discussions Tuesday, Finance Minister Yitzhak Mordechai asked Mr. Eagleburger for \$10 billion in additional aid over the next five years, a government source said Wednesday. This would help cover \$8 billion in Gulf war costs and another \$20 billion for settling hundreds of thousands of Soviet immigrants until 1995, the source said.

Baghdad reports capturing British airman

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Baghdad said Wednesday that its forces captured a British pilot whose Tornador fighter bomber was shot down over Iraq, and said it is holding allied prisoners as deterrent against attack at potential targets.

Baghdad Radio identified the pilot as Robert James Stewart, but did not say when his aircraft was shot down.

In London, the Ministry of Defence said a Flight Lt. Stewart was missing since Saturday and already included in the list of eight British airmen missing in action since the start of the air raids on Iraq six days ago.

The ministry said it was investigating reports that the Iraqis had captured him.

Baghdad Radio said Lt. Stewart's Tornador was shot down near the southern city of Basra, from where the Iraqi military is directing operations in Kuwait. It said two Iraqi civilians captured him and then turned him over to military.

The report on the downed Tornador followed a newscast during which the general command of the armed forces released its 17th military communiqué.

The communiqué claimed eight more "enemy aircraft" were downed Wednesday and a number of barbaric pilots "captured. But it gave no details on numbers and nationalities of the prisoners.

It reported more than 30 bombing sorties across Iraq and Kuwait Wednesday and said that more than 60 civilians were killed.

The communiqué said the best captured pilots have been placed at vital targets, a reference to the human shield tactic Iraq revived this week when it

Turkey held accountable for aggression on Iraq — Aziz

Combined agency dispatches

BAGHDAD WARNED Ankara of unspecified "consequences" for allowing the allies to stage bombing attacks against Iraq from the Incirlik base in southern Turkey.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz told his Turkish counterpart, Ahmet Kirtocbe Alptemcin, Ankara's stance was tantamount to "aggressive conduct," the Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported.

It said Mr. Aziz told Mr. Alptemcin in a message: "It has become certain to us and to the world that the U.S. military aircraft used the Turkish base of Incirlik to raid targets within the borders of Iraq. Thus, Turkish territory has been used, with the approval of the Turkish government, to commit aggression against Iraq, a country friendly to Turkey."

"I am certain that you are well aware of the consequences of

such behaviour," Mr. Aziz said in the letter.

This "aggressive conduct by your government came to top premeditated hostile acts against Iraq which started when Turkey cut off the Iraqi pipeline and confiscated food and medical shipments belonging to Iraq," Mr. Aziz said in his letter.

He was referring to the trade embargo Turkey enforced against Iraq after the Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait in line with United Nations resolutions.

The Turkish measures included halting the flow of an estimated 1.2 million barrels of Iraqi oil through a trans-Turkey pipeline to the Mediterranean for export.

Mr. Aziz said Turkey's stand towards the Gulf conflict was "shameful... and unprecedented in the history of relations between the two countries."

"The sole motive for this act is a desire to kneel to the United States which is launching a

treacherous aggression against Iraq and its people," Mr. Aziz said.

He held Turkish President Turgut Ozal responsible for "dragging Turkey into American schemes and pursuing a policy that contradicts... the basis of good neighbourly relations."

Meanwhile U.S. planes continued attacks on Iraq. Witnesses said 45 American fighters and bombers flew back to Incirlik, near the southern city of Adana, in the morning.

Dozens of planes later roared into the clear afternoon air.

Turkey has been reluctant to say publicly that the U.S. air force is striking Iraq from its territory and has barred reporters from approaching the Incirlik base perimeter.

But a Foreign Ministry spokesman made clear Wednesday that Incirlik, 700 kilometres west of Iraq, was as much a part

Blaze continues in Kuwait

BAHRAIN (AP) — A southern Kuwaiti oil field ignited by the Iraqi army was still ablaze Wednesday and oil and salvage industry executives said it would probably burn for weeks.

Concern for the environment was at a peak.

Iraq's official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) blamed the smoke from the burning field for greasy "black rain" that fell on its Bashehr province Wednesday.

"According to environment specialists... the rain was black and greasy because of the fire in the Kuwaiti oil wells and other areas in the Persian Gulf region," the agency said in a dispatch monitored in Cyprus.

The fires could be left to burn themselves out. But it was not immediately possible to assess the impact of the Iraqi act on military operations by allied forces.

A spokesman for the U.S. military command in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, said that they had no new information on the oil

fields, because dense overclouds made it difficult "to go back and check."

However, an oil industry source in Saudi Arabia, speaking on condition he not be named, said: "Al Wafra oil field is still blazing in the area just outside the neutral zone. It (the fire) is spread over an area of half a kilometre."

The Iraqi move, first reported through aerial reconnaissance by the U.S. military Tuesday, may have been made to provide ground cover from attacking planes or to impede a ground onslaught by the allied forces, some military officials said.

Other analysts have said that Iraq might lay waste to Kuwait's vast oil fields if it is forced to withdraw from the country.

The Iraqi leadership has also vowed to burn oil fields in Saudi Arabia, home to the world's largest oil field. An Iraqi report that one of its welters of Scud ground-to-ground missiles had set fire to the Abqaiq oil processing centre in the Ghawar field

was flatly denied by Saudi and independent oil sources in the kingdom.

The Al Wafra field, developed by the U.S. firm Texaco, is in the Kuwaiti half of the neutral oil zone shared by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Its fringes start a few kilometres from the border town of Khafji between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Khafji has been deserted, and only a skeleton staff remains at the premises of the Arabian Oil Company, a Japanese firm developing fields in the Saudi part of the neutral zone, said the executives who are close to the region.

Oil executives and the U.S. military also reported fires at the storage tanks of the Shuaiba industrial complex and Mina Abdullah, further north along Kuwait's coast.

One oil source said the storage tanks at Shuaiba and Mina Abdullah continued to blaze



A badly injured woman is evacuated to hospital after an Iraqi missile landed in Tel Aviv Tuesday night.

3 said killed near border

By Dilip Ganguly
The Associated Press

RUWEISHED — A bomb or missile reportedly killed at least one man and wounded another near the Jordan-Iraq border, which Iraq closed Wednesday as the flow of people fleeing allied air raids increased.

One evacuee said up to 5,000 people hoping to cross into Jordan were blocked by the closure. Iraq gave no explanation for its action.

A police official said two bedouins were brought to Jordan from Iraq late Tuesday with serious injuries and one died before reaching hospital in this border post town.

The official, who cannot be named under standing regulations, said he was told by Iraqi authorities that the two were hurt by a bomb from an allied warplane.

He said Iraqi officials told him two girls, aged three and seven, died before they could be brought to Ruweished, 100 kilometres away. The hospital is the closest to the scene.

A Red Cross official in Amman confirmed the death and injury involving the bedouins.

They reportedly were injured at 8:15 p.m. (1815 GMT) Tuesday. By midnight, Iraqi officials had closed the border from their side without giving any formal notification, Jordanian officials said.

They said the stream of fleeing evacuees crossing the desert border 80 kilometres east of the immigration post at Ruweished stopped suddenly during the night.

Interior Ministry Under-Secretary Salameh Hammad said in Amman that 7,336 people passed through Ruweished into Jordan between midnight Tuesday and noon Wednesday.

Those appeared to be people who crossed through Iraq's border post shortly before the closure, then spent the night at camps en route to Ruweished (see page 3).

That number was nearly three times greater than on any other day since the U.S.-led coalition launched its attack on Iraq.

Mr. Hammad, who oversees refugee relief, said about 12,000 people, mainly Egyptians and Sudanese, have crossed into Jordan since the war began.

A Jordanian who crossed the border shortly before midnight, his wife and five children squeezed in a heavily loaded car, said he was the last to do so.

"There were about 10 or 50 other cars waiting in line behind me at the Iraqi border post, including some friends with whom we were travelling in convoy, but they have not been allowed to cross," said the man, who asked not to be identified.

Crown Prince: War escalated, consequence will be very grave

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said in an interview Wednesday that the situation in the Gulf was being aggravated every day and warned of the consequences.

Interviewed by NBC television, the Crown Prince said, "We do everything we can to ensure that this country does not become a battlefield. That was made very clear. But it is becoming more and more dangerous generally speaking."

"We opposed occupation and annexation of Kuwait," he said. "We are opposed to the war option whether coming from Iraq or the U.S., and I would like to remind you that although there is widespread sympathy for Iraq on the popular level, our official position is very clear, that we do not approve of this conflict and we feel it could have been averted."

"In fact we are taking the same position as the Vatican calling on all sides to end hostilities and get back to the causes of the problem."

"The official position is what I stated it is. But as far as the popular view is concerned — when you see this massive bombardment on Iraq... the movement of evacuees, now thousands of them coming here to the Jordanian border — there is a lot of sentiment; these are Arab towns and Arab people are also getting hurt and injured. This does not mean that taking prisoners of war and putting them in combat areas is acceptable officially," he said in reply to another question.

On a question whether Jordan could be involved in the war now that missiles are being fired from Iraq at Israeli targets, the Prince said: "People react in different ways. Here and there are demonstrations; in the U.S., people are calling for war and others (are) calling for peace. The sooner we can start looking at

people as people regardless of their nationalities the better. As far as the Jordanian air space is concerned, we cannot shoot down missiles and we do not have the armoury for that. But as far as getting into the war we have made it very clear that we will not be a passage for aircraft from any quarter."

In reply to a question about future U.S.-Jordanian relations, the Crown Prince said: "I sincerely hope that they will change for the better. God knows things are strained at the moment on the basis of some kind of regional thinking because that calls for a conference on regional security and cooperation in the Middle East (to) which I think Jordan is a well-suited to contribute. But at the moment with the high passions and the casualties of war it sounds a little academic to talk about the future, but we have to start thinking about that."

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Jordan supports Iranian call for OIC meeting on Gulf war

Combined agency dispatches

AMMAN — Jordan supports the Iranian call for an urgent meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri said Wednesday.

Mr. Masri, in comments carried by international news agencies, also said he would visit Iran next week in efforts to coordinate efforts aimed at ending the Gulf war and arriving at a peaceful solution to the conflict.

Jordan and Iran last week resumed diplomatic relations, severed in 1981 because of Jordan's support for Iraq in the Iran-Iraq war. Mr. Masri's visit to Iran will be the first by a Jordanian official since 1979.

Both Jordan and Iran have been active in efforts by the non-aligned group of nations to arrange a ceasefire in the Gulf war.

Mr. Masri said Jordan was seeking international support for submitting a ceasefire resolution to the U.N. Security Council.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati Wednesday denounced what he said was the destruction of Iraq by the allies.

He said Iran and a number of other countries he did not identify are working for peace. But he added that "some countries are bent on destroying, dividing and or weakening Iraq so that no (future) government will be able to hold Iraq as a powerful Islamic state."

The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) said Mr. Velayati said on a Tehran Radio programme that the allies were

hitting economic targets and residential areas in Iraq and destroying the lives and wealth of the Iraqi people.

He said the attacks "only served the interests of the Zionists."

Meanwhile, the English-language daily Kayhan International in Tehran said that if a victory in the war were to be decided now, it would be Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. It said he had proven his point and should now relinquish Kuwait.

"It has been proven that the United States and its allies cannot gain an easy and spectacular win after six days of war," IRNA cited the daily as saying.

"If we were to tally an outcome and decide on a winner, it would be Iraq and the person of Saddam Hussein," the daily said.

"Having shown that it is strong, determined and courageous enough to face the United States, Iraq should make a mediated settlement of this war possible," Kayhan International said.

Pakistani Premier Mohammad Nawaz Sharif arrived in Turkey Wednesday and said he was on a mission to end the hostilities between Iraq and allied forces in the Gulf.

"The situation in the Gulf concerns the entire Muslim community and we are hoping we can find a peaceful solution," the premier told reporters at the airport.

Pakistan, Iran and other countries in the region are believed to be concerned about Turkey's increased role in the Gulf conflict. Last week, Turkey allowed U.S. forces to start using a joint Turkish-American base to launch attack on Iraq.

A top Iranian official visited Turkey Monday. Turkish officials said Alireza Moayeri, a special envoy of Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani, expressed his administration's concern that the war would widen and engulf the whole region.

Jordan's Parliament Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat has sent a statement to his Turkish counterpart, Kaya Erdam, calling on Turkey to stop "the hostile actions launched against Iraq from Turkish territory," members of parliament said.

Algeria and Libya have also been in touch with Turkey.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Eng. Ata Abul Rashta the spokesman of (Hizbut-tahrir) Al Tahrir Party (Islamic Liberation Party) in Jordan, holds a press conference on "the new crusade war in the Gulf," today, 24.01.1991 at 10.00, at the Nabatiya Hall at

(AMRA HOTEL)
Jabal Amman - 6th Circle

Scuds not the only missiles in Iraqi arsenal

By Jim Abrams
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Scud is not the only deadly missile in Iraq's arsenal. The Iraqi president has yet to introduce his French-made Exocet missile, which nearly sank a U.S. warship four years ago.

He also has Chinese-made Silkworm missiles.

Military experts say both the Exocet and the Silkworm have been grounded so far in the Gulf by U.S. and allied control of the air over Iraq and Kuwait. But allied forces should expect to see the missiles at some point.

"We assume they have a fairly good supply and they will attempt to use them during the conflict," Colonel Ralph Cossa of the national Defence University said Tuesday. "They need to get at least a moral victory."

Like the Scuds that have terrified Israel and Saudi Arabia, the Exocets, Silkworms and surface-to-air rockets are overmatched by U.S. defence systems and have limited military capabilities.

The U.S.-made Patriot anti-missile rocket has compiled a good record in downing Scuds, despite Tuesday night's failure in Israel, when a missile sailed in untouched and caused three heart-attack deaths and 96 injuries near Tel Aviv.

Analysts do not know how many Exocets Iraq possesses, but it could easily number more than 100. The French arms contractor Aerospatiale sold more than 2,000 of them worldwide after the air-to-ship AM-39 version was put in production in 1980, and Iraq has been one of its best customers.

The Exocet became a darling of the international arms market after Argentina used it to sink the British frigate Sheffield and cripple other shipping in the 1982 Falklands war.

The 636-km missile, delivered from jet fighters, flies by radar two to 2½ metres above the surface of the sea, is difficult to detect and is extremely accurate. It is designed to hit the operations room, or nerve centre, in the side of a ship.

Exocets were used extensively against Iranian shipping in the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. In May 1987 an Iraqi F-1 Mirage jet mistakenly fired an Exocet into the side of the guided-missile frigate USS Stark in the Gulf, killing 37 sailors.

The Stark, not expecting an attack and with its radar system on "remote automatic," failed to get off a single round at the Exocet. This time, however, the U.S. side will be better prepared.

Cossa said the military has a three-layered defence against Exocets and Silkworms: Air-

craft, ship-based missiles and ship-based guns.

So far, the Iraqi air force has not challenged U.S. air superiority, but no one is discounting the possibility the Iraqis will one day bring their warplanes out of the bunkers and go on the attack.

"I don't think the Iraqis are kamikazes," Cossa said, referring to Japanese suicide missions against the allied forces in World War II. "But they are willing to take what they assume will be heavy losses" in inflicting damage on allied positions and the U.S. fleet in the Gulf region.

He said their tactic in the Iran-Iraq war was "to fire at maximum range and hope it hits something."

If they get past the AWACS reconnaissance planes and navy F-11 Hornets, Iraqi missile carriers would be immediately picked up by Aegis radar systems on U.S. ships.

The Exocet has a range of only 56 kilometres, well within the 80 kilometre radius covered by the Aegis. "They can't get within range of us and he (Saddam Hussein) can't do a damn thing about it," said one navy officer.

As a third line of defence, U.S. warships have the Phalanx system, consisting of radar-controlled 20-millimetre Gatling guns designed to hurl 3,000 rounds a minute at incoming missiles.

Bombs explode at U.S. targets in Turkey

ISTANBUL (AP) — Bombs exploded Wednesday morning at the offices of two U.S. organisations, slightly injuring one Turkish woman and causing extensive damage, the semi-official Anatolia news agency reported.

No one claimed responsibility for the first explosion. At the scene of the second blast, the attackers left handbills signed by a leftist group protesting Turkey's involvement in the Gulf war, said a reporter at the scene.

The same group had also claimed responsibility for Tuesday's bomb blasts at North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) maintenance facility in Istanbul.

Government officials have expressed fears of attacks because Turkey has permitted U.S. warplanes to stage bombing raids on Iraq from the Incirlik NATO base.

Anatolia said the first explosion Wednesday occurred at the offices of the American Board, a missionary group that has been running schools and a publishing house in Turkey since the 19th century.

A group official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said three people disarmed and tied up a policeman and a guard at the entrance and walked up to the fourth floor. There, they bound employees, planted an explosive device and left, he said.

The official said a Turkish woman employed by the missionary group was injured slightly in the blast. The explosion knocked down some walls and blew out windows, he said.

The two other employees were taken to the police station to identify several suspects detained after the incident.

The second blast came 10 minutes later at the offices of the Turkish agent of ABS, an American shipping company, causing damage, Anatolia reported.

The attackers tied up people in the building and planted an explosive that went off after they left, the dispatch said.

A reporter at the scene said they left behind handbills signed Dev Sol — or Revolutionary Left, an extreme leftist underground group that has been carrying out attacks since the 1970s.

In Marseille, French police detained some 20 suspected Islamic militants after an anonymous warning of plans to attack a major oil port, police sources said.

They said a telephone caller gave the French embassy in Algiers names of suspects allegedly planning to attack oil facilities in the southern port of Fos-sur-Mer.

Two Algerians were among those detained in swoops on the Muslim community in Marseille and Paris.

French security forces went on high alert this month to prevent attacks linked to the Gulf war. There are some four million Muslims in France, most of them immigrants from North Africa.

Many Soviet immigrants experience their first war

By Sergei Shargorodsky
The Associated Press

TEL AVIV — Just after a wailing siren signalled the approach of Iraqi missiles, Soviet emigre Rita Klebanov looked at a television screen where smiling musicians were moving to the rhythm of a Hebrew song. Nine was wearing a gas mask.

She thought that meant she did not have to wear one either. Then a plane rang and a friend yelled: "Put the mask on and run to a sealed room. This is a taped concert."

War has come as a new experience for more than 200,000 Soviet Jews who have arrived in Israel since a fresh immigration wave began in mid-1989.

Most of them knew air raid sirens from World War II movies, but found it hard to believe that those screaming across Israel were real. Iraqi missiles struck central Israel Friday, Saturday and Tuesday.

"I still don't understand what war is. It happens somewhere far away. So we put on the gas masks, sealed ourselves in a room, so what. It does not touch us in any way unless a missile falls on our heads," said Mrs. Klebanov, a 24-year-old Leningrad native who specialises in caring for retarded children.

"It was like a game, zaritzka," she added.

Zaritzka, or summer lightning, is a game acted out in Soviet schools in preparation for future military service.

Mr. Klebanov and her 26-year-old husband Yaakov, an engineer, arrived in June and settled in a Jerusalem suburb. Like other Israelis, they were given gas masks by the government.

Then came the Gulf war and army instructions to seal a room against a chemical attack. They did, packing it with canned goods and bottles of water, yet war still seemed unreal.

"We knew that Israel is surrounded by Arab enemies but we could not imagine that something like that would happen," said Mrs. Klebanov.

For others, the sound of sirens was painfully familiar.

"I can't say that I'm not afraid. Maybe this is because I don't understand the situation as well as Israelis yet. ... Sitting in the sealed room, I thought of the great patriotic war (World War II). I was four in 1944, and it brought back horrible memories," Martha Grazer, who arrived on Dec. 29, told the daily Jerusalem Post.

The Klebanovs had a few moments of panic during the first barrage of Iraqi rockets Friday. They did not quite understand the orders being broadcast in Hebrew on Israeli radio. They called friends, and friends called them in turn, explaining what to do.

"We got many phone calls from immigrants all over the country, who felt they were not properly updated," said Gad Ben-Ari, spokesman for the quasi-governmental Jewish Agency that helps bring Jews to Israel.

On Friday, the radio took two hours to find a Russian speaker who could translate army announcements. But during the next attack Saturday, Russian translation came within minutes. Starting Monday, volunteers were on alert to help immigrants.

Elsewhere, preparations were thorough. Bonnets in Russian accompany the chemical protection kits, and civil defence instructions on Israel TV were given in Russian for several weeks.

Since the Gulf war began, Hebrew newspapers have attacked Russian-language pages to their daily editions. Israel Radio issues appeals to Israelis to donate radios and other war necessities to newcomers. Israelis offer to help them seal rooms and supply them with food.

The newcomers have dwindled from a record 35,000 in December. But some 8,697 came between Jan. 1 and Jan. 20, including more than 2,500 since the start of the war.

They receive gas masks upon arrival at Ben-Gurion international airport near Tel Aviv, a city targeted by Iraq. An army officer instructs them in Russian.

"Each time we are stunned by how calmly they accept the situation, as if they were born into it," said Mr. Ben-Ari. "Those who are really scared are in a wait-and-see situation in the Soviet Union."

Americans 'panicking'

NEW YORK (AP) — Even though the Gulf war is on the other side of the world, fears of attacks in the United States have touched off something of a run on gas masks, chemical suits and other safeguards.

"People aren't buying one at a time. They're buying a dozen," said Ed Sklar, president of Splytech Inc., which has sold New Yorkers hundreds of gas masks and chemical suits in recent weeks.

Security companies report heightened interest in their systems, map and grocery stores are running on empty, and even guns and ammunition are selling particularly briskly.

"People are just kind of panicking," said Wallace Conway, who works at Oklahoma army surplus in Tulsa. "They think terrorists are going to attack with chemical weapons."

Among the hottest items were gas masks like those sported by jumpy television reporters during Scud missile attacks in Saudi Arabia and Israel.

"Yesterday, we had 65 masks at 10 a.m. when we opened, and they were gone by 11 a.m.," said Jeff Durbin of Surplus City in Berkeley, Michigan. Meanwhile, in Atlanta, a woman wanted to know where she could get one for her dog.

In the San Francisco area, Chinatown grocers reported customers were hoarding 20-kilo sacks of rice, canned goods and even toilet paper as a safety measure should stocks start to run low.

U.S. does not rule out attempt to capture Saddam

WASHINGTON (R) — The White House said on Tuesday it could not rule out an eventual attempt by allied forces to capture Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein to face charges of mistreating prisoners of war.

But spokesman Martin Fitzwater was quick to restate that the goals of the U.S.-led coalition remained the same: Drive Iraqi forces from Kuwait, restore Kuwait's former government and bring stability to the region.

Nonetheless, the White House was clearly angered at the sight of captured American pilots of downed fighters being shown on Iraqi television coupled with an Iraqi vow to use them as human shields against attack at strategic sites.

"We're saying that we believe Saddam Hussein should be held accountable for his treatment of the POWs (prisoners of war) and other crimes should they be deemed having been committed," Mr. Fitzwater told reporters.

"No decisions have been made about how that could occur. War crimes might be one approach. But in some fashion we do intend to hold him accountable."

Asked if that could entail the capture and arrest of Saddam on war crimes charges, Mr. Fitzwater said:

"We just have to wait and see how things unfold. But certainly nothing's ruled out."

He said the stability objective in the Gulf was generally taken

to mean destroying Iraq's ability to make nuclear, chemical or biological weapons.

But asked if stability of the region might depend on President Saddam being removed from power, Mr. Fitzwater said that when the war was over "then we'll take a look at the other security needs that need to be dealt with."

After the briefing when Mr. Fitzwater learned reporters had seized upon his remarks, he returned to the press room to express concern he was being quoted out of context.

"We are not forgetting Saddam Hussein and not changing our policy," Fitzwater said. "We can't tell what's going to happen at the end of the war."

Asked if President Saddam might have retreated to a bunker underneath the presidential palace in Baghdad, Mr. Fitzwater said: "We don't know where Saddam is."

President Bush has stressed that allied bombing raids have not targeted President Saddam. An executive order forbids U.S. involvement in assassination attempts on foreign leaders.

Capturing a foreign leader to face "criminal charges," however, is deemed legal.

It is a touchy subject at the White House because arresting General Manuel Noriega was a declared objective of the December 1989 invasion of Panama and Noriega's escape to the papal embassy in Panama City made catching him doubly difficult.

French security forces went on high alert this month to prevent attacks linked to the Gulf war. There are some four million Muslims in France, most of them immigrants from North Africa.

Bush frustrated at lack of damage information

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bush is frustrated by a lack of information on how much damage has been inflicted on Iraqi military targets by more than 10,000 allied bombing raids, the White House said Tuesday.

Mr. Bush has asked for damage reports, but has been unable to get them, White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said.

The Pentagon has claimed an 80 per cent success rate in the bombing raids — meaning that the planes had reached their designated targets and opened fire.

But cloudy, foggy weather over Iraq and Kuwait has hampered the Pentagon's ability to assess the damage done to Iraq's

military capabilities.

Americans have been shown pictures provided by the U.S. military of expensive weapons hitting their targets dead on. But the lack of information about the extent of damage has raised questions about the success claims.

Allied forces have claimed air superiority in the war to drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait, but so far the massive bombing raids have been unable to destroy the mobile Scud missile launchers.

The independent Soviet news agency Interfax quoted an unidentified member of the Soviet general staff as saying 90 per cent of all allied air strikes against Iraq had missed their targets.

Mr. Fitzwater told reporters Tuesday Mr. Bush would like to have a better damage assessment. "President Bush has asked for the same kind of damage reports that you have, and it's not there," he said.

Asked whether the president was frustrated by the lack of information he replied: "I think everyone is, yes. We'd all like to see better damage assessment."

Tom Kelly, who briefs reporters regularly on the war, said Tuesday weather was improving over Iraq although it was still cloudy over Kuwait.

"I didn't know the president was frustrated," he said in answer to a question. "I can assure you

we are working hard. What we have had over the past several days has been bad weather. You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear."

Pentagon officials have said assessing bombing raid damage is a time-consuming process of experts poring over aerial photographs of the bomb site to determine whether the target was successfully destroyed.

"I think the key operative thing to remember when we talk about bomb damage assessment is that it is a process, it's a very intense process, it's time-consuming, it's manpower intensive, and it takes a lot of time," said U.S. navy Captain Dave Herrington.

Kuwaiti oil wells easy to burn, engineers say

LONDON (R) — Iraq could easily set fire to Kuwait's shallow oil wells before abandoning the emirate, starting blazes that could last for months and sending out enough smoke to block the sun, engineers said.

Some scientists said the smoke from such fires could even change the world's climate, but most said there would be little or no impact on the weather.

Although there are no signs of an Iraqi military withdrawal from Kuwait, U.S. military officials in Saudi Arabia said on Tuesday that Iraq had already started blowing up some of its oil wells and storage tanks.

Engineers said that because Kuwait's oilfields are close to the surface and easy to exploit, they would burn easily.

"Kuwait has some of the most readily available oil in the world," said one engineer who has worked on installations there.

"They are not very deep, so if a fire can get below the surface of the wellhead it can burn for a long, long while."

Safety valves built into the wells and a rapid response by fire fighters could prevent serious damage.

But industry experts said skillfully placed explosives could destroy even the most inaccessible safety valves situated deep underground.

And until Western forces secure full control of a well, there would be little prospect of sending in firemen.

Kuwait has 1,080 onshore oil wells that produced 1.5 million barrels of oil a day before the war started, but industry sources said only 365 were active when Iraqi forces invaded the emirate on August 2.

In more than 90 per cent of the active wells the oil gushes naturally to the surface without the aid of pumps.

Engineers said that if these wells caught fire they would have a ready supply of fuel to

burn at extremely high temperatures for several months.

Some scientists and meteorologists said they would throw clouds of thick smoke into the upper atmosphere that could disrupt rainfall in Asia and lower temperatures the world over.

Carl Sagan, a scientist at Cornell University, New York, who has investigated the after-effects of nuclear explosions, expressed particular concern that South-east Asia's monsoon rains could be disrupted. He said these depend on hot air rising over the area around Kuwait.

But most scientists said hundreds of oil wells would have to burn for six months or more before the global climate would be at risk. Furthermore, not all oil well fires throw out huge clouds of smoke.

Britain's meteorological office said in a study of the possible dangers of burning oil wells in Kuwait that if all the country's oil wells blew up and burned for a year the smoke could possibly reach the upper atmosphere and reduce monsoon rainfall. But it expressed doubts that this would happen.

John Pike, a climatologist with the Federation of American Scientists in Washington, agreed that "if all the wells went up simultaneously it could create the kind of firestorm that would black out the sun."

"But," he added, "it is very difficult to create those conditions."

Oil engineers said it was unlikely that all the wells would go up in flames because of safety mechanisms built into them and the difficulty of blowing them all up.

The wells in Kuwait are of a type known as a "Christmas tree" a pipe that sticks two to three metres out of the ground with a number of valves sticking out of it.

"It's not easy to damage one of these wellheads," said one engineer. "You would have to

place a mine right up next to it, it wouldn't do much damage if it were just nearby."

Most wells are also fitted with safety valves deep down below the surface, which are designed to shut off the oil flow almost immediately when a wellhead is disrupted.

If the underground safety valves work, the initial blowout sends a flame shooting 50 to 100 metres into the air, but it dies within minutes for lack of fuel.

But engineers warned that the safety valves have a high failure rate and the Iraqis may have deep-mined the wells in order to destroy them.

"If the safety valve fails, and you have a really bad blowout. The well could burn almost indefinitely until you were able to put it out," an oil company engineer said.

Upon reaching the burning well, firemen could either stop the blaze by turning off an emergency choke valve, normally situated away from the wellhead, or by drilling a hole into the well away from the wellhead and pouring in concrete or water.

But engineers said the fires might be so close together and so hot that firefighters would be unable to get close enough to put them out easily.

There is virtually no danger that a well fire could ignite Kuwait's vast underground reserves — at 94.5 billion proven barrels the third largest in the world. Engineers said there was no oxygen underground to fuel such a fire.

Environment specialists have issued repeated warnings that a fire of that magnitude could bring about an ecological disaster not only to the Gulf region but also the entire Middle East.

Dr. Abdullah Tougan, a Jordanian expert, said Tuesday the effect of the fire could reach as much as five million square kilometres.

Iraqi Scuds hit at morale of Saudi oilmen

LONDON (R) — Iraqi Scud missiles may not be damaging the eastern Saudi city of Dhahran but they are fraying nerves among some oil workers after successive days of attacks.

American sources at the Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Aramco) in the city told Reuters by telephone that some of the workforce wanted to leave despite the 100 per cent record of U.S. Patriot missile defence batteries in stopping the Scuds.

"Morale is not real good at the moment," said one manager on Tuesday, but added that whatever happened production operations should be unaffected by any foreign employees leaving.

U.S. officials said Tuesday that scores of Americans stranded in the Eastern Province had left the country on U.S. military flights.

"This has got a lot of people worried and wanting to leave. It's just snowballing," one American executive said Monday, after the first Scuds were shot down.

"Now people feel vulnerable. If they are not used to it and not hired to work under these conditions it's nerve-wracking."

However, one of his colleagues said the agitation was confined to a small but vocal group of Aramco employees. And the numbers leaving compared with between 12,000 to 14,000 expatriate employees remaining in Dhahran after an exodus following Iraq's August invasion of Kuwait. About 40 per cent are Westerners, with dependants the figure totals around 30,000 to 35,000.

Both American executives agreed that "the people most anxious to go" would not jeopardise operations, although some key personnel in maintenance and engineering were looking to leave.

Aramco is responsible for virtually all of Saudi Arabia's 8.5 million barrel per day production.

Output dropped to 6.1 million bpd last Thursday night, the first day of the fighting, but is now back between 8.0 and 8.5 million bpd.

Fluctuations in output largely result from reluctance by shipowners to send their tankers to the Gulf to load the oil.

"Operations could go on without the Americans, the Saudis could keep the oil flowing without the technicians and engineers," another manager commented.

"There's nothing to affect production, this is the easiest oil field in the world to operate. But, longer term many projects under design may be threatened by a break in continuity if you pull a couple of key people out," his colleague agreed.

"The people who really have the problem are those employees from the Asian continent, the Pakistanis and Indians. Their countries have no air lift arranged, so they have to make their way to Jeddah to get to Egypt for a flight out (home)," said one of the oilmen.

One Aramco manager said: "There are dependants going out. I have no knowledge of anyone breaking their contracts but people are weighing their options."

Hardened oil industry veterans appeared both unshaken and unstirred by the battles overhead.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.	
Apple	550 / 480
Banana	500 / 450
Banana (Mukammal)	450 / 400
Beans	500 / 400
Cabbage	100 / 80
Carrot	250 / 200
Cauliflower	300 / 250
Corn	200 / 150
Cucumbers (large)	100 / 50
Cucumbers (small)	250 / 200
Dates	500 / 400
Eggplant	180 / 120
Garlic	1700 / 1500
Lemon	250 / 200
Mallow	180 / 120
Marrow (large)	120 / 80
Marrow (small)	250 / 200
Onion (dry)	270 / 220
Onion (green)	150 / 100
Okra	600 / 500
Orange	440 / 250

Pepper (hot)	350 / 300
Pepper (sweet)	120 / 80
Potato	250 / 200
Radish	100 / 50
Sage	350 / 250
Spinach	120 / 80
Tomatoes	120 / 80

PRAYER TIMES

06:49	Fajr
06:30	Sunrise (Dhuha)
11:48	Dhuhr
14:41	'Asr
17:06	Maghrib
18:26	Taha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish	Tel. 210740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel.	632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.	Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661737	Terrace Church Tel. 623666
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.	Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 775261.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.	Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.	Armenian International Church Tel. 627981, 685326.

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295.	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 81581
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Queen attends graduation of People's Army unit

RBID (Petra) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Wednesday attended the graduation ceremony of a People's Army unit held at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST).

Queen Noor, who was accompanied by Her Royal Highness Princess Aisha Bint Al Hussein and the wife of the Jordanian Armed Forces chief of staff, watched the People's Army recruits, university students and personnel, demonstrating military skills they acquired during the course period.

The Queen distributed awards to those excelling in the course.

The graduation ceremony was attended by the JUST president, the Irbid governor, senior army and police officers and university students.

The Queen also visited the first field hospital where she was received by the director of the Royal Medical Services and the director of the hospital. The Queen was briefed by the hospital's director on its duties and then toured its various sections.

Peace activists report civilian targets destroyed in Baghdad

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Earlier eyewitness reports that only strategic sites had been "surgically" removed from the map of Iraq became obsolete Wednesday as peace activists arriving from Baghdad testified that collective housing units and entire blocs in several residential neighbourhoods of the Iraqi capital Baghdad have been damaged if not entirely destroyed by the U.S. and its allies air and missile raids.

"Although I was only able to venture out into the city once after the bombings began, it was evident that many non-strategic sites had been hit in the city," said peace activist Dina Lawrence.

"We did not see human casualties, but we were looking for open shops, which hardly existed, and as we drove through Baghdad we realised that entire blocs of collective housing had been hit many times and in many different neighbourhoods," Lawrence, an American from Detroit told the Jordan Times.

While many people arriving from the Iraqi capital have said that Baghdad residents had bomb shelters in their apartment complexes, Lawrence said that few bomb shelters existed. "People have basement-but no actual bomb shelters," she asserted.

Fifteen members of a Gulf peace team, of which Lawrence is one, said that some 90 members of their team are still in Iraq. While 15 are in Baghdad the rest are in uncertain locations in southern Iraq, a group spokesman told a press conference Wednesday.

The group, which consists of nationals of over a dozen countries is committed to non-violent solutions to world conflicts. Members of the group began arriving Dec. 24, at a peace camp set up at the Iraqi-Saudi border, 310 kilometres south of the Iraqi capital. The group says Saudi officials refused them permission to use Saudi territory for their peaceful mission.

While many members of the group were expected to leave Iraq as soon as transportation was available to them, others have apparently decided to stay on.

"Some people want to stay on and to keep up the goodwill," said Pastor Dan Simmons from Portland, Oregon.

According to peace activists in Amman, among those staying are three German passivists who said they planned to stay for at least another three weeks.

Asked if their group's failure to prevent the outbreak of war had been a disappointment one member said, "yes, we never actually believed the U.S. would attack, we were in absolute shock."

Some two dozen members of the group had been sleeping in the "peace and friendship" village outside Baghdad when at 1:45 local time last Thursday the bombs began to hit the ground.

"We ran outside to avoid the houses caving in on us and lay down on the banks of the river Tigris," Lawrence recalls. "Later we were relocated to the Al Rasheed hotel, where many Iraqi families, who had no shelter, came to spend the night," she added.

Lawrence and other members of the peace camp said that Iraqis had been extremely polite to foreigners and that at no time had they felt any "negative vibrations".

"We felt apologetic about all this destruction, all these displaced, uprooted people who had lost all their security and had been made so very vulnerable attack," Lawrence said.

Asked about the mood of Iraqis, the peace camp activists described the Iraqis in Baghdad as stoic and courageous.

"They are identifying themselves totally with the motivation behind the Iraqi resistance to the attacker," one activist told the Jordan Times.

"They feel they have an inherent moral obligation to resist and defend themselves against the attack of the mighty superpowers," said another peace activist.

One woman said she was surprised that so many non-Iraqi workers were still employed in the hotels and some of the shops. "Surely I said the Iraqis need the work, and then I was told the obvious... the Iraqis are all on the war front."

Jaljouli inspects southern region

KARAK (Petra) — Health Minister Adnan Jaljouli Wednesday inspected the southern regions including Karak Governorate and the Ghor Mazra'a district where he announced that the Ministry of Health has finalised preparations at hospitals to deal with any emergency.

The minister visited the government and Italian hospitals of Karak and a hospital operated by the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) at Ghor Safi where he inspected services and preparations for emergencies. Jaljouli said that the health ministry is now turning its attention to evacuation and civil defence centres, and those operated by the charitable societies to ensure that they have sufficient medical supplies.

Ministry to buy surplus tomato

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Agriculture will start buying all the extra quantities of tomato from Jordanian farmers and process them, according to a decision issued Wednesday by Minister of Agriculture Mohammad Al Alawneh. Alawneh said the decision was made to help farmers in the current circumstances prevailing in the region. The minister who toured the vegetables and fruits central market in Amman Wednesday asked agricultural marketing and manufacturing companies to re-open the tomato paste factory in South Shuneh in the Jordan Valley as soon as possible.

PSD burns drugs

AMMAN (J.T.) — Drugs with an estimated street value of JD 25 million were burnt at the site of the Jordan Cement Factory Company Wednesday by the Public Security Department.

A spokesman for the PSD's anti-narcotics bureau said that the haul of drugs included 4,134 kilograms of hashish, 23 kilograms of heroin, 79 morphine syringes and 14 captagon pills.

These drugs were seized in Jordan while en route to neighbouring Arab countries and the traffickers have been referred to the courts, a PSD spokesman said.

Officials from the ministries of justice and health as well as senior PSD officers were present at the burning of the drugs.

In a statement on Arab Police Day last month, Brig. Izzeddin Zaza from the PSD said that although Jordan's central geographical location serves as a ground for trafficking drugs, there is a low rate of drug addicts in the country estimated only at 13 for every 10,000 inhabitants. Zaza, who is assistant director to the PSD's anti narcotics bureau, said that his department, established in 1972, was now employing police helicopters to monitor borders with neighbouring Arab states to prevent smuggling operations and drug trafficking.



A refugee camp at Al Ruweished border post (left) is being readied for refugees who started arriving from Iraq and Kuwait (right)

Because of strained relations with Sudan, Cairo hits back at refugees

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Egypt has denied entry to a group of Sudanese nationals scheduled to arrive at the port of Nuweiba from Aqaba after leaving Iraq and Kuwait, and this move has forced international relief agencies to divert the homeward journey of the Sudanese through Syria, officials said Wednesday.

While the Egyptian move is officially described as delayed bureaucratic procedures, diplomatic sources here interpreted it as a political message from Cairo to Khartoum following calls in the pro-Iraq Sudanese capital for reprisals against Egypt for its anti-Iraq stand.

A group of 550 Sudanese who were scheduled to board a ferry from Aqaba late Tuesday for Nuweiba across the Red Sea was turned back from the port after Egypt said no proper procedures had been followed to facilitate the group's overland trip through Egyptian territory to Sudan, officials told the Jordan Times.

The Egyptian refusal to allow in Sudanese followed a sharp warning to President Hosni Mubarak to the Sudanese government, earlier Tuesday, to stop the entry of Mr. Mubarak, whose group

try is one of the staunchest Arab partners in the American-led alliance against Iraq, was responding to anti-Egyptian protests and calls by demonstrators for attacks on the Aswan High Dam in southern Egypt.

"I will not allow under any circumstances that an inch of Egyptian territory be attacked," Mr. Mubarak told reporters. If such attacks are attempted, he said, "Sudan will pay a high price."

Egypt enjoyed excellent relations with Sudan under the regime of Jafar Numeiri, who was toppled in 1985. Relations had been on a roller-coaster since then, with on-again-off-again signals of renewed warmth in the post-Numeiri era, but the Gulf crisis has created severe strains.

Egypt's top security official said in Cairo Wednesday that 500 Sudanese viewed as security risks had been expelled from the country since the Gulf crisis began.

The state-run Middle East News Agency (MENA) quoted Interior Minister Abdul Halim Musa as telling local reporters that security at Egyptian airports, seaports and land borders had been upgraded and "suspicious travellers" are being denied entry. He gave no details.

The agency also reported that out of 182 people who

arrived Tuesday night from Khartoum, 69 Sudanese were barred and would be sent home.

Another 31 Sudanese arriving at Cairo airport Monday also were denied entry, reports said.

After last Saturday's large anti-Egyptian demonstration in Khartoum, Egypt ordered a number of punitive measures like suspending Egyptian flights to Sudan and closing down the branch of Cairo University there. But these measures were rescinded Tuesday.

In Amman, Mohammad Yahya Maroofi, head of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), said arrangements were being made for the Sudanese stranded at Aqaba to be flown home from Damascus, Syria.

The Sudanese were on their way back to Amman land on Tuesday, Mr. Maroofi, an Afghan diplomat, said. Another 1,900 Sudanese are housed in transit camps in Jordan, and Mr. Maroofi said that transporting them to Damascus for flights home remained an option.

IOM has been organising the passage home for evacuees from the war zone in the Gulf since the Aug. 2 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Its operations are funded by international contributions.

Mr. Maroofi said he did not expect the Egyptian decision to affect evacuees of other nationalities. A group of 962 Vietnamese and eight Philippine nationals are scheduled to be ferried to Egypt to board Hanoi-bound flights contributed by the Japanese government.

The Vietnamese were scheduled to be flown home in mid-January but Saudi Arabia retracted an earlier overflight right given to Aeroflot aircraft which were supposed to have carried them. Saudi airspace has been closed since then.

A total of 7,376 evacuees, including the Sudanese turned back from Aqaba and the Vietnamese, remained in Jordan Wednesday, according to U.N. figures. These included Egyptians, Sudanese, Moroccans, Indians, Pakistanis, Sri Lankans, Bangladeshis, Moroccans, Djiboutians, Afghans, Ugandans, Mauritians and Iranians in addition to several Latin Americans.

In the absence of regular airline flights to Jordan, IOM is seeking alternate means for transporting home the refugees. Evacuation by sea from Aqaba as well as by air from Damascus is under consideration.

"We have to get these people out of here at any cost," he said.

7,366 evacuees cross into Jordan Wednesday

AMMAN (J.T.) — A total of 12,000 evacuees have arrived here from Iraq since the air raids on Iraq began last Thursday, and a total of 7,366 evacuees of different nationalities crossed into Jordanian territory Wednesday, according to an announcement by Salameh Hammad head of the evacuees affairs committee.

Jordan is committed to the agreement reached recently with the United Nations Resident Representative in Amman Ali Atiq, and will make arrangements for housing the evacuees at Azraq Camp One and Azraq Camp Two which have been equipped for this purpose, Hammad said in his statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The evacuees were allowed in following the conclusion of the agreement with the United Nations office after the concerned international organisations pledged to cover the cost of food supplies, transport and medical services for the evacuees before their repatriation to their homeland.

The pledges came following Jordan's earlier decision to close the border with Iraq because of the failure on the part of foreign governments and international organisations to pay compensation to Jordan for the \$56 million it had spent on the earlier waves of evacuees.

According to Hammad, his committee is maintaining close coordination with the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Disaster and Relief Organisation (UNDRP) following a series of meetings held to review arrangements for receiving the evacuees at Al Ruweished border post and their housing at the two camps.

Hammad said that Azraq Camp Three will be ready in the coming few days along with the Rabieh workers city at Aqaba.

AMMAN — Jordanian pharmacists have raised JD 150,000 in cash and in-kind assistance in contributions for the Iraqi people, among other measures to show solidarity with Iraq.

Jordanian Pharmacists Association (JPA) President Taysser Al Himsi made the announcement at an emergency meeting of the JPA general assembly at the Professional Associations complex in Amman Wednesday.

The JPA has opened the door for its members to volunteer and fight along-side the Iraqi armed forces and people, and all pharmacies will be opened in Jordan around the clock to offer emergency services should the war engulf Jordan or in case of an Israeli aggression on the Kingdom, Himsi said.

Himsi demanded that all pharmacists cooperate with the government, private hospitals and health centres as well as the People's Army. The JPA will have to shoulder its responsibility in any confrontation with the enemy and its cooperation with the government and its continued supplies to medicines to the Iraqi people in conjunction with the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUJS) was essential, Himsi noted.

He said that the JPA has secured several consignments of medicine to Iraq in various ways and through different means. Himsi disclosed that employees of the Ministry of Education have collected JD 37,000 worth

of medicine for Iraq, and noted that a special JPA committee has been assigned the task of collecting contributions for Iraq. Himsi also announced the formation of a higher emergency council which comprises representatives of other professional associations as well JPA in order to organise support for Iraq and to collect blood donations.

The JPA, he said, is in dire need of JD 200,000 to help reopen Ibn al Bitar hospital in Baghdad, and at least 50 doctors and surgeons are expected here from Algeria on their way for Baghdad to provide medical assistance.

One of the JPA members, Amin Shuqair, announced a donation of JD 25,000 for the national efforts to help Iraq, while other members announced smaller donations for the cause.

Later, Himsi and a team representing the JPA board called on speaker of the Upper House of Parliament Ahmad Al Lawzi and reviewed with him official and public activities related to the national efforts to bolster Jordanian's steadfastness and help for the Iraqi people.

Lawzi told the team that the Upper House was in constant touch with the various world parliaments inviting them to send teams here and study the situation and acquaint themselves with the Jordanian position and the danger inherent in the Gulf war. Lawzi said parliament will be willing to support any mobilisation effort undertaken by the Jordanian organisations.

Islamists call on Iran to join forces with Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — Islamist deputies in Parliament Wednesday called on Iran to declare a holy war in support of Iraq in the face of the American-led coalition in the Gulf.

Should Iran continue to adhere to its present neutral stand, it would risk losing gains made through the Iranian revolution, especially as Tehran has been announcing its strong opposition to Israel and the United States and declaring these two as its main enemies, deputy Laith Sbeilat said in a statement to the Agence France Presse (AFP).

Sbeilat said that he plans to send a cable to the spiritual leader of Iran urging him to enter the war on the side of Iraq. "Should Iraq face defeat, the Arab and Islamic world would be transformed into foreign military bases to hit against Iran and other Arab and Muslim nations," Sbeilat warned.

Deputy Ali Faqir said that Iran is called on to enter the war and help Iraq in its confrontation of the Western coalition. His views were supported also by Ahmad Kofahi from the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Jordanian women committee for the support of Arab steadfastness Wednesday issued an appeal urging nations of the world and international organisations to put an end to the Gulf war and to convene an international conference to discuss all problems of the region.

"Our main aim is to stop this war immediately and to help open the door for dialogue and peaceful negotiations," the women's statement said.

They said that the United States aggression on Iraq was designed as a means to secure American hegemony on the Arabs and ensure domination of the oil wealth of the Arab World.

"We in Jordan are threatened by Israel which openly declares its expansionist and aggressive plans, and its aim of evicting our brothers and sisters from the occupied West Bank, while our children live in constant fear of the future," the statement added.

Lower house passes unlawful gains law

AMMAN (Petra) — Parliament Wednesday endorsed the law of unlawful gains which was referred to it by the government, and discussed a number of other topics on the agenda.

The Wednesday ordinary session of the Lower House of Parliament chaired by Abdul Latif Arabiyat and attended by Prime Minister Mudar Badran and cabinet members was mostly dedicated to replies by a number of ministers to queries raised by deputies. Minister of Culture and Youth Khaled Karaki gave a reply about the state's awards to encourage writers, artists and poets and about investigations into a case involving a senior ministry official.

The query was raised by deputy Ahmad Oweidi Abbad. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Salem Masa'deh replied to a question by deputy Abdullah Ensour about the functions of civil registration offices at Baqaa, and Minister of Finance Basel Jandaneb replied to a question concerning the ownership of land in Ruseifa that has been offered in a concession to the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company.

Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Raouf Al Rawabdeh replied to a question about the appropriation of a piece of land at Khreibet Al Souq, while Minister of Industry and Trade Zaid Fariz replied to a query about the prospects of setting up an industrial city at Balqa Governorate. Minister of Agriculture Mohammad Alawneh replied to a query connected with the National Agriculture, Development Project, and Minister of Higher Education Saeed Al Tal dealt with a query concerning the acceptance of Jordanian students coming from Kuwait in Jordanian universities.

Several proposals were made concerning the local municipal councils, and the financial and administrative issues related to the Jordanian Ports Corporation.

The government ministers replied to questions about the government's efforts to control dust resulting from the loading of phosphate on vessels in Aqaba.

Why Saddam is the Arab World's hero

By John Rice
The Associated Press

AMMAN — Saddam Hussein's defiance of Western military power has made him a symbol of pride for many Arabs and his name could rally attacks against the West for years to come, Arab analysts say.

"Saddam's already won the... the political war. You've made him a hero," said Kamel Abu Jaber, a University of Jordan political scientist.

Marchers by the thousand chant Saddam's name in Jordan and the occupied West Bank. Hundreds of thousands demonstrated in support in Sudan and Algeria last week.

Whispers of support come in the coffeehouses of Syria and the mosques of Morocco and Pakistan, even though the governments of these countries have all contributed troops to the anti-Iraq coalition.

Amman's Uncle Sam restaurant raised a poster of Saddam cuddling a little girl two

days after U.S.-led allied forces walloped Baghdad — and after Saddam responded by lobbing missiles at Israel.

"Saddam is standing with us," said restaurant owner Sami Zureik.

The missile attacks on Israel, however little damage or casualties they caused, electrified Arabs who had felt impotent because of repeated defeats at the hands of the Jewish state.

Many Arabs are convinced that Western countries are out to crush Saddam so Iraq will pose no threat to Israel or the West's oil supplies.

Saddam's defeat "would cause immense anger," said Assad Abdul Rahman, a former political science professor at Kuwait University and a member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's Central Council.

Failure to quickly remove foreign troops and address Arab grievances in the wake of an Iraqi defeat "would be a perfect recipe for social, economic and political upheaval," he said.

"You're going to wind up with 50 million to 200 million Arabs against you," said Rami Khouri, a prominent journalist and publisher.

Saddam has capitalised on long-smoldering Arab resentment of the West by demanding that any withdrawal from Kuwait be linked to an Israeli pullout from occupied Arab territory. The allies have rejected any linkage.

Like many Arabs, moderates such as Abu Jaber and Khouri believe Saddam was wrong to invade Kuwait. But few feel much sympathy with the Kuwaitis, who were seen as rich and arrogant.

Abdul Rahman said that Saddam's regime was disliked, even hated, by many Arabs before the Gulf crisis.

But, as he is quoted as saying, "Saddam's a son of a bitch, but he's our son of a bitch."

Ahu Jaber warned that if the Palestinian problem isn't solved, another Saddam will come... and another, and another.

"Saddam will live for 1,000 years in the hearts of the Arabs... the man who stood on his two feet and said, 'no'."

Non-Arab analysts are divided over whether Saddam's heroic image will last in Arab perceptions.

Robert O'Neill, professor of war history at Oxford University and former director of London's International Institute for Strategic Studies, noted: "Even a beaten enemy can have a long after-life... a defeated Saddam, particularly a dead one, will take on a much favourable image."

Itamar Rabinovich, professor of Middle East studies at Tel Aviv University, disagreed.

"Some of the sentiments you're observing are nourished by an unrealistic assessment of the power of Saddam Hussein," he said.

Still, Saddam's stand in Kuwait has inspired many Arabs — much as the doomed defence of the Alamo in Texas by 187 Americans against the Mexican army in 1936 once inspired expansion-minded Americans.

And French during an era of colonial domination.

"It's not up to the Western world to draw our lines any more," Khouri said. "These are the borders that guarantee we stay poor, divided, have and have-not."

Even greater is rage at the United States, Britain and France which oversaw the creation and growth of Israel, as well as its domination of the Palestinian Arabs.

Khouri noted that the United Nations has made little move to force Israel to accept 23 years of Security Council resolutions supporting the Palestinians, while it authorised a massive military force to attack Iraq within months.

"When we see that, we say take your Security Council resolutions and shove 'em," Khouri said.

In an earlier televised interview, Khouri said many of the nations supporting the allied forces were "bounty hunters" seeking political or economic aid from the United States.

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Deep wounds, long memory

MUCH HOPE was pinned during the run-up of the Gulf crisis to the explosion of the war on Jan. 16 that the European countries, particularly France and Italy, would somehow break free from the American-inspired move towards the war option and would have the guts to stand up and tell Washington that the use of force was not the answer to the problem. As it turned out, the hopes were ill-founded. These two countries, along with Britain, all of whom enjoyed exceptional relations with the Arab World to the extent that they seemed very familiar with the pulse of the Arab masses, are now equal partners in the massive assault against Iraq.

While one can understand the European approach, which rules out the acquisition of territory by force — a principle staunchly adhered to by Jordan and most Arab states — it is indeed very difficult to comprehend the apparent vengeance with which the European allies in the anti-Iraq coalition are battering an Arab country. If that is not enough, then one only has to look at some of the glee of war communiques issued from Paris, Rome and London. War is war indeed, but is it war that is being orchestrated against Iraq today? Isn't it aimed at the annihilation of a nation?

It may be naive at this point to issue a fresh reminder to the Europeans that they would indeed be the net loser in the bargain if the U.S. were to achieve its strategic, military and economic objectives in the Middle East: That of acquiring total domination of Arab oil resources, output and international prices as well as doing away with an Arab military power. But facts remain facts and they also include the reality that the war now being fought in the Gulf is an Israeli war fought by the U.S. to protect the Jewish state's interests.

At the same time, what should be very resounding to the Europeans that they seem to have overlooked not only the great damage that their alliance with the U.S. has done to its relations with the Arab man on the street but also the long-term repercussions of their participation in a war of destruction and dismemberment of the Arab and Muslim nation of Iraq.

What is even more surprising is the full-fledged Turkish contribution to the massacre in Iraq. Turkey is not only an Islamic country but also very much in the Arab region and its links with the Arab World need no emphasis. One would have expected Turkey to adopt indeed a defensive position, but not to offer its territory for aggression against Iraq.

No matter what which way the Gulf war turns out, the wounds inflicted by the Europeans on the Arab mind and heart will not be easily healed. And the Arabs do not have a short memory.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE allied forces against Iraq are no doubt frustrated now because their claim that they would finish the task of liberating Kuwait in five hours was dashed away, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Wednesday. The allied forces have now raided Baghdad and other Iraqi towns for seven straight days, losing more and more captives and losing face before the whole world, the paper said. Seven days have passed since the start of the air raids on Iraq and the Iraqis are unhindered by the bombings and shellings as they are making ready to take revenge on the invading forces, the paper noted. It said that the Americans will be punished along with the British, the French and the other allied forces arrayed vis-a-vis Iraq and along its border, the paper continued. It said that the war criminals who launched aggression on Iraq, killing innocent people should never escape punishment anywhere in the world and not only in the Arab region. The paper said that the holy war has now started; and all the crusaders and the war criminals and invaders will sooner or later get their punishment. The paper said that Bush, Mitterand, Shamir and Major, the four main enemies of Arabs and Muslims are now discovering the truth about the situation, and that they are heading for defeat.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily criticises the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for its unfair dealings with questions related to the Gulf war. The red cross was quick to remind Iraq of the need to honour the Geneva conventions concerning the treatment of the captured air men, but failed to raise a finger to stop the air raids or to defend the Iraqi civilians now facing the onslaught, Salah Abdul Samad notes. It looks as though the red cross is following in the same footsteps of members of the U.N. Security Council and other nations which fell under the influence of the U.S. administration, and seems to be acting in a double standard vis-a-vis the Gulf crisis, the writer adds. The Jordan National Red Crescent Society (JNRC), the writer says, should intervene and raise this question with the Red Cross, urging it to demand protection to the civilian population of Iraq. He says the Red Cross should be reminded that in humanitarian issues there can be no double standards or selectivity, and that it should undertake all necessary measures related to the protection of civilians.

'War and peace; close-up, hands on'

By Paul William Roberts

"If two parties of believers take up arms the one against the other, make peace between them. If either of them commits aggression against the other, fight against the aggressors till they submit to Allah's judgement. When they submit make peace between them in equity and justice; Allah loves those who act in justice."

The Koran 49:7

AMMAN — Just as the eighteenth and nineteenth century European slave traders — along with the American and British plantation owners who purchased their human commodities — viewed the Africans they kidnapped, brutally shipped across the Atlantic, and sold into lifetimes of backbreaking misery as sub or non-humans, so the Nazis brainwashed themselves into believing Jews were little better than animals in order to treat them worse than animals. I didn't work that well, however. Even SS boss Heinrich Himmler, complained to his Führer that troops were getting demoralised by weeks of shooting women and children during the first mass-executions in the Baltic states (it was, he also added, using up too much ammunition). Hence: gas chambers. If you cannot see the horror you're perpetrating it's easier to perpetrate it.

Now, mass-slaughter has gone high-tech. The killers of this world don't even have to be on the same continent as those they're killing these days. One U.S. fighter-pilot in the Gulf, asked recently how it felt finally flying a real combat mission, said, "nothing to it. It was no different from our practice exercises." Cocooned in a billion-dollar flying video game, it probably wasn't.

Watching television in Amman on Jan. 21, I saw the first footage of U.S. and allied pilots who'd been forcibly removed from their pricey cocoons, obliged to eject and float down into the hell they'd been busy creating. They soon found out what the difference between reality and practice exercises was.

The men had all clearly been beaten badly, some still in shock, and were patently reading their denunciations of U.S. action in Iraq from cue cards. It was a chilling and repugnant spectacle. From Washington — indeed, the world — the reaction, predictably, was outrage and fury, with George Bush making noises about a war crimes trial for Saddam Hussein.

"But let's be honest, or at least objective. These pilots were responsible for countless deaths — quite possibly deaths of women and children among them — and massive destruction of private as well as government property. Surgical bombing, besides being a revolting term, is a myth — particularly when the bombardment in question is as gargantuan as the one currently reducing Iraq to rubble. What did the pilots expect? A warm welcome from a military official with the Geneva Convention tucked under one arm, some tender medical attention, and then a comfortable room to wait out the war in a prison more like an escape-proof country club?"

According to refugees reaching the Jordan-Iraq border, civilian casualties from U.S. bombing are mounting into the thousands — perhaps the tens of thousands. Like the United Nations, the Geneva Convention is one more tool the Americans use when it suits them and ignore when it doesn't. During an interview with

ex-CIA Director William Colby last year, I asked about a covert mass-assassination operation he'd authorised while Hanoi Station Chief during the Vietnam war. He said no innocent civilians had been killed. Then I showed him part of the testimony he'd given before a U.S. Congressional hearing where he admitted he wasn't sure his assassins had been able to distinguish between loyal South Vietnamese citizens and members of the Viet-Cong. Neither the lie nor lying about it appeared to worry him unduly. Colby and Bush have much in common.

"Surgical bombing," "smart bombs" — the oxymorons of war, like "fighting for peace," and "military intelligence." Reality, however, is gradually coming home to America's armchair warriors — and they don't like it. Even "Iraq" is a euphemism; it is Iraqis, human beings, who are beneath the bomb-doors, behind the range-finders. If truth is the first casualty of war — although truth, in this case, had been taking a severe beating long before war started — then language is a closely-connected second. During Vietnam we heard about "defoliation," "termination with extreme prejudice," and so on. Now we have a new lexicon to help us justify violating the most basic of all religious and secular laws. Language and thought are inseparable. Written language began with pictures, evolving to accommodate conceptual thinking. Yet our minds and hearts still react most intensely to image-based words — witness the power of Shakespearean language, with its profusion of metaphor and imagery — Pentagon terminology avoids image-based terms, or employs spurious metaphors. What possible connection can there be between the action of surgeon's life-saving scalpel and the effects of a bomb? In truth, people are the only casualty of war.

Propaganda is patently not one of Saddam Hussein's major talents. The images of those captured and brutalised pilots have done him more damage than anything Washington's psychological warriors have yet been able to dream up. To Iraq's strongman, presumably, they are supposed to represent the kind of rough justice anyone attacking his people deserves and can expect. If someone broke into my house and butchered my family they'd look a lot worse than those pilots did after I'd finished with them. Doctors examining defendants at the Nuremberg Trials said many had their testicles crushed to pulp. But the world might have found a little sympathy in its media-hardened heart if Saddam had released pictures of his own mutilated, crippled and dead. To him, of course, such images would signify weakness, could be potentially demoralising. One day they'll be seen though. It is this attitude, more than anything, that reveals the true guilt in the Gulf — minds that simply cannot understand each other. The Middle East might as well be the Middle Earth.

Battered pilots were not the only horrifying pictures I saw that day, however. Earlier on, I'd been shown photographs of West Bank Palestinians who'd encountered the Israeli version of justice. Children and teenagers with severed legs, arms, hands; babies with skin burned like falafel balls; old men whose eyeballs had been gouged out; a young man who'd had nails driven through his palm...

Clearly — and I've even heard Jewish friends say as much in unguarded moments — the Palestinians are not human beings to Israel's policemen and soldiers. You have to get very close to someone when you burn their genitals with a blow-torch. The U.S. military can drop napalm on South-East Asian peasants; it

can explode devices that remove all the oxygen from air. American soldiers and civilians alike need to breathe; but it doesn't have what it takes to pick up a blow-torch for some close-up, hands-on work. The Americans might have turned Saddam into a demon, as they did with the late Ayatollah Khomeini — the U.S. always needs a demon in its cosmology, and they've been through a fair number since Gorbachev turned out to be such a let-down — but they still view the Iraqis as human beings. That's what comes of teaching Thomas Paine to your youth. Unless Washington manages to keep its impersonal, long-distance, hands-off air war going, morale will become a third casualty at the front ("back" would be a better term in this case). And at home the Pentagon will receive its second exorcism and flag manufacturers will be kept busy replacing the charred rags dangling from government poles. Even now, no doubt, a typewriter is clacking away somewhere in New York City, spewing out pages of a manuscript entitled "WHY ARE WE IN IRAQ?"

It is those photographs from the West Bank that now fuel Saddam's passion and resolution — "now" being the operative word. But what is it that motivates George Bush and his bordered taxpayers? Kuwait? That's hardly mentioned anymore. No, after declaring war on Iraq and then bombing the country non-stop for 48 hours, it is the fact that Saddam had the nerve, the sheer affront to retaliate that appears to irk the American president. The man said to be "at peace with himself" after being consoled by the Ayatollah Billy Graham, who presumably assured him God was on his side. Only bullies get outraged when someone fights back.

At least Israel doesn't kid itself. Since the grandfather of Zionism, Theodor Herzl, told his diary in 1859 that the native inhabitants of Palestine would have to be "discreetly" forced out of their country by whatever means necessary, the plan has not exactly been a closely-guarded secret. Right and wrong aren't allowed anywhere near the matter. Might and wrong are the methods of choice.

A medieval Christian court in Europe once put woodworms on trial for eating through the supporting beams of a church, so Israeli law has a precedent to fall back on when it is occasionally invoked against the sub-human Palestinians. The intifada, to which this increasingly apocalyptic mess in the Middle East is linked whether anyone in Washington or Tel Aviv likes it or not, comes down to human suffering. Not long-distance, but close-up and brutal hands-on human suffering. The very worst kind of human suffering. Israeli law-makers and law-enforcers would do well to heed the words of the English philosopher John Locke: "No government can have a right to obedience from a people who have not freely consented to it." The Bible has a bit of advice too: "One law and one ordinance shall be both for you and for the stranger that so journey with you." (Book of Numbers 15:16). Sitting here in the middle of that part of our planet which produced the three great civilising religions of the occident, I'm reminded of the Hollywood producer advising a screenwriter adapting the Bible for film: "Take what you like and leave the rest out."

Paul William Roberts has just completed a book on Egypt to be published by Random House and is currently researching in Jordan and Iraq. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

Palestine talks can prevent war's escalation

By Hanna Siniara

IN retrospect, more diligent efforts could have been made to prevent the war with Iraq. President Bush has ignited a schism between the West and the Muslim world, and the events of the past few days are just the tip of the iceberg. We are in the initial stages of a long drawn-out war, that is ever-expanding; today Israel, tomorrow maybe Jordan or Syria, eventually, the whole Arab World.

The millions of victims that are going to feel the effects of this war could have been spared if Kuwait had been left alone, of course, but also had Bush opted for a diplomatic resolution instead of relying on his technological superiority. The "new order" being advocated by the Bush administration does not include the implementation of Security Council Resolution 242; instead the Americans chose war and military might over a political path based on all relevant U.N. resolutions.

Certainly the blame is not limited to Saddam Hussein or George Bush. The Kuwaiti rulers could have avoided the takeover of their country; overproduction of oil, and the avarice of the rich is an indirect cause of what is happening in the region. The arms producers are to blame, for making weapons and technologies available in abundance to those who could afford them. The Middle East was more unstable and thus stockpiled much more than its needs.

Israeli politics are to blame and Israeli society should shoulder the burden because it encouraged extremism and failed to guide its elected leaders to find a solution to the major source of instability — the forced occupation of another people, the Palestinians.

George Bush and Yitzhak Shamir could have avoided the war if either one of them had been serious and honest about the need to deal with the Palestinian people and their legitimate national rights. Bush refused to link directly or sequentially the Palestinian question with a solution to the Gulf crisis. Shamir helped the Bush administration isolate the Gulf crisis from the Arab-Israeli conflict by providing no political options and no peace initiative of a credible nature to provide a negotiated outcome of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. It led Palestinians to conclude that neither the leader of Israel nor the leader of the U.S. was willing to commit themselves to the implementation of U.N. resolutions in the context of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

By Howard Goller
Reuters

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM

Israel, basking in rare U.S. praise for its restraint in the face of Iraqi missile strikes, has a "wish list" of political and economic needs it now hopes Washington will meet.

After two Iraqi barrages wounded 28 people, Israel suspended its usual policy of swift, sometimes brutal, revenge under pressure from a U.S. administration anxious to avoid turning the Gulf war into a broader Arab-Israeli conflict.

Its restraint won worldwide diplomatic and media goodwill — a stark contrast with the battering its image took during the 1982-85 occupation of Lebanon and its crackdown on a now three-year-old Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories.

The U.S. administration, at odds with Israeli prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir since March for

his refusal to accept a U.S. proposal to talk to Palestinians, was for once happy with the headline leader.

"I think that Israel's stock in both the White House and the Congress has probably never been higher than it is at present," said U.S. Congressman Stephen Solarz of New York.

The Foreign Ministry boasted it had received 34 letters of support from foreign capitals. Foreign leaders assailed the attack on civilians in a country not even engaged in the Gulf conflict and praised Israel's restraint.

Even Shamir's most steadfast parliamentary opponents embraced his policy.

"I'm very happy and I enjoy being the official spokesman for Israel," Yossi Olmert, the government press office director, told reporters outside a cabinet meeting.

Israel is traditionally Washington's closest Middle East ally.

But U.S. President George Bush's administration has long assailed Shamir for policies it regards as obstacles to Middle East peace.

Now Shamir hopes to garner world support for Israel's view that the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) cannot be a partner in peace talks with Israel and that any settlement with Palestinians must encompass Arab states.

Israel receives three billion dollars a year in U.S. aid, more than any other country. But in meetings this week with visiting U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, it is likely to raise additional military and economic requests.

Israel warmly welcomed the arrival of U.S. patriot air defence missiles and crews at the weekend to help guard against further attacks. But surrounded by hostile Arab states, it is likely to seek more arms.

A record influx of Soviet Jewish immigrants has taxed Israel's limited resources, creating shortages of jobs and housing. It is still awaiting \$400 million in U.S. housing loan guarantees.

Israel would like Washington to ease its multi-billion-dollar debt to the U.S. when it joined a U.S.-led anti-Iraq alliance earlier in the Gulf crisis. Israel and Egypt, partners in a 1979 peace treaty, are the largest recipients of U.S. aid.

Israel news reports said the government might also ask the United States to compensate it for losses in tourism and other industries because of the Gulf war.

Bush has said that after the war he hopes to devote efforts in the Middle East to solving the problem of the 1.75 million Palestinians living under Israeli rule in lands captured during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

The shifting sands of the Arabian desert

By Mort Rosenblum
The Associated Press

IN NORTHERN SAUDI ARABIA — In the dawn chill, when the breeze is rich in scents and too gentle to carry sand, the desert can be thrilling even beautiful. But it is a bell of a place to fight a war.

The broad swath of no man's land separating desert storm forces from their Iraqi foes defies all clichés about the Arabian desert. It is sandy, but rocky. There are dunes, but also marshes.

Now, with sporadic rains, there are lakes and rivulets and sinkholes called "sabbkhas" that can swallow a tank.

Mostly, the northern desert is a desolate, featureless moonscape that only a bedouin could love. Soon, it is likely to be a killing field.

Since mid-August, the Saudi desert has been dotted with new, shifting hummocks: Tents of leafy plastic camouflage netting, with heavy gun barrels poking out ominously toward the north.

Make-shift shelters cover hundreds of thousands of troops under a half-dozen flags. Some live in tents. Others spread bedrolls on cots or directly on the ground, with the scorpions and snakes.

Troops have studied their surroundings for the purpose now at hand. Most are eager for combat, not for the love of battle but because they are convinced that only by storming Kuwait will they escape the desert.

No one underestimates what lies ahead.

Iraqi forces are dug in, with reinforced bunkers, tank traps and eastern berms, barriers of compacted earth. Much of Kuwait is marshland, with treacherous soft spots and impassable terrain.

Even short of the border, the desert is formidable. Sharp rocks and nasty ruts jolt vehicles beyond their endurance. Army drivers go through tires five times faster than normal.

Difficult access, along with operational reasons, has kept forward troops at the posts. Their only visitors are the camel herders who sell fresh milk, known generically as "bedouin bob."

Every shift in the weather takes its toll. In summer, the heat turned metal surfaces to waffle irons, sapping strength from the hardest. Now, when night winds blow, the desert is glacial.

For days on end, driving rains streamed through the porous netting of the camouflage material, soaking troops to the skin.

"I took the mail to one unit and some old boy came out, looked like he'd fallen in a mud puddle," said Dana Patterson, an army engineer. "He'd only been out on guard duty."

Hot or cold, there is always the sand. Desert-trained troops have seen nothing like it, sand as fine as foot powder that works into the deepest crevices of their bodies and their gear.

Tank crews sometimes stop twice a day to spend hours dismantling gun mechanisms for a thorough cleaning. Manuals call for light oil on metal surfaces, but that only manufactures sandpaper.

Of all the combatants poised for desert storm, the tank crews are most aware of the terrain. Especially for those in the smaller M-60 tanks, it will mean the difference between success and failure.

Israeli strategists with long experience note that the desert favours and hinders both sides alike. In most tank combat, terrain allows for ambush and surprise. Here, the edge goes to the longer guns.

"We'll have to outmanoeuvre them and not let them get the drop on us," said Capt. Ben Flatau, a U.S. marine tank officer, whose shorter-range M-60s must face laser-equipped Soviet-made T-72s.

The M-60 has a lower profile, allowing it to hide in swallow depressions.

If the northern desert is Iraq's back yard, ground forces commanders say, it is nothing like the eastern Iraq battlefields where Saddam Hussein's troops fought Iran.

"Don't forget," Flatau said, "the ground is new to them, too."

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Remote islands, mountains tune in to Gulf war

By Dean Goodman
Reuter

RAROTONGA, Cook Islands — Local eccentric Piri Puroto III, who claims the world's record speed for scampering up coconut trees, stopped climbing to say he fears a stray missile from the Gulf war could slam into his palm-fringed tropical island.

"We are a fun, peace-loving country and we have no missiles to fight back," he said as other Cook Islanders explained that Scuds and Tomahawks weren't likely to make it this far, half a world away from Kuwait.

In a war whose images are bounced from satellites and whose skirmishes are described live as they happen, even the farthest-flung South Pacific islander expects information.

Around the globe, in spots that barely make it onto maps, people are hearing about the Gulf.

In a remote Antarctic base where the sun never sets this time of year, a switchboard operator huddled by a shortwave radio to keep workers and scientists up to date on the fighting.

In an isolated part of western Nepal, a deputation of townspeople showed up at the local hydro-electric plant

to demand longer hours of power so they could keep up with the Gulf news.

At a Vietnamese army guest house, foreigners sit slumped in lumpy armchairs, drinking beer and watching day-old footage of the allies air raid on Baghdad.

In the Solomon Islands a local telephone company that managed to tap into Cable News Network satellite broadcasts was mobbed by locals, who wonder if the Gulf fighting may be a Biblical prophecy coming to pass.

The Polynesian inhabitants of Rarotonga, watch the war on television, which came to this part of the South Pacific only two years ago.

On this, the main island of the Cook Island group, people gather around a radio in the police station at noon for the latest news.

"It's a sad thing, people will die," said schoolteacher Terapai Moetaua.

Thousands of miles away, in Nepal, news of the Gulf war is filtering into remote corners of the mighty Himalayas, where roads are few, radio reception uneven, and batteries expensive.

The news is generating some odd ideas. One villager who trekked down to the eastern bazaar town of Dhankuta, 450 kilometres

from Kathmandu, was told he couldn't buy a litre of kerosene because of "a war in the West," teacher Govinda Bhattacharya said by telephone.

Wearily climbing up the rough path home, the man told everyone he met he was going to kill his chickens and goats as it seemed no one would survive for long.

"Eat good food as long as you are alive," he advised people along the trail as he spread the news. Over in Ghulmi, 300 kilometres west of Kathmandu, police inspector Gopal Man Shrestha said some people were worried about Iraq's chemical weapons. "Some have come to me and asked if my office has enough gas masks for everyone," he said.

In the normally sleepy Solomon Islands, 2,575 kilometres northeast of Sydney, about half the households have a radio and almost all news of the fighting comes from rebroadcasts of Radio Australia.

Part of the reason for the intense interest in the war in the former British colony is religion.

"Religion is a big thing here," one resident said. "People think about what it says in the Bible about the last days before the second

coming, about nations taking up war. They wonder if the words in the Bible are being fulfilled."

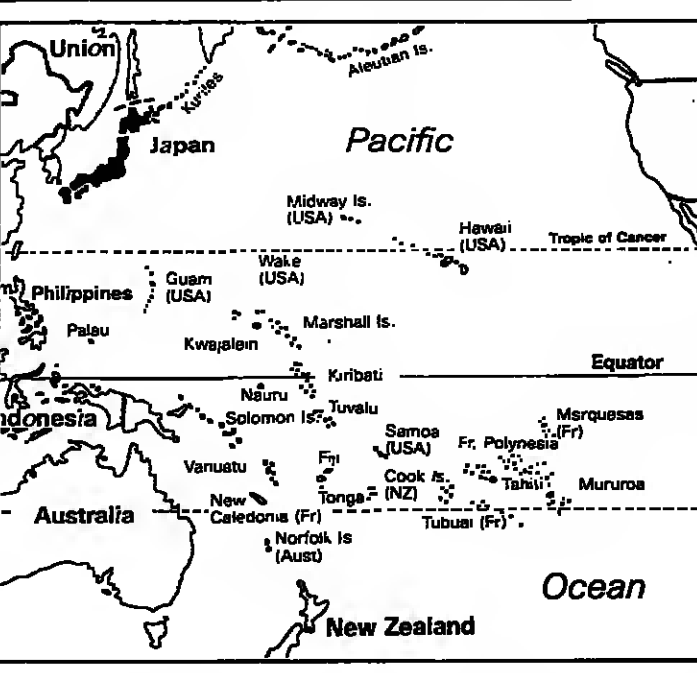
In Papua New Guinea, news of trouble far away comes almost as a welcome relief for people more used to hearing about problems at home, including a two-year armed rebellion on the island of Bougainville.

The only daily newspaper, The Post-Courier in Port Moresby, put out a Saturday edition this week for the first time in its 22-year history to update events in the Gulf.

Down in the Antarctic, workers at New Zealand's Scott Base are closely following the war on these endless summer days — the long, dark winter will set in late next month.

Helen Wills, who runs the base's switchboard, said shortwave radio kept the team of just under 100 workers and scientists up to date. The government sends a regular digest of Gulf news by telex from Wellington, friends and relatives back home help out.

"We all want to know, I ring my parents every day to get an update on what's happened," said Wills by radio telephone from the base near the Ross Ice Shelf. "Whenever we make a call out of the



base to New Zealand we always ask what's going on in the Gulf."

In the Vietnamese capital of Hanoi, a city of two million people with one foreign English language newspaper that arrives three days late, diplomats and Western aid workers complain they feel poorly informed.

"We've got no news about the Gulf at all from our office back home," one senior Western European diplomat said. "They're too busy — they've forgotten us."

An English teacher from the Britain said her Vietnamese students pumped her with questions about events in the Gulf. "They asked me what I knew, I asked them what they knew," she said.

Not everyone in Vietnam clamours for news. Tran Duck Minh, a barber, found out about the war from a customer, a day and a half after bombs began falling on Baghdad.

"I've been busy in the last two days," he said. "I have no television."

Garden of Eden

By E. Yaghi

THE noise of the city thundered in Yayah's ears and blotted out the songs of the early morning sparrows. The aroma of jasmine and roses drifted up to greet him as he reluctantly climbed into a private taxi and headed for work.

Cars honked relentlessly and the taxi driver swore at various offenders. The driver spat out of his half open window and then flipped out a cigarette from a box beside him, pushed in the car lighter and nervously lit his cigarette. Yayah sat in the back of the car to avoid the driver's company and meditate in the few minutes he had before reaching his job as engineer at a multinational company somewhere in suburbia. He choked on the grey smoke that clouded even the back seat and stared with watery eyes at the madness about him. His dark reddish brown hair curled in ringlets about his face and his brows wrinkled in frustration.

When he reached his destination, he gave the driver a quick, "stop here, please," and ambled out of the car, reached in his pockets and pulled out some money with "how much?" He paid the required amount, grabbed his briefcase and told the driver, "thank you."

Slowly he entered the huge glass facade building, shuffling his feet in besistance. After he entered the office, he passed an array of secretaries and with amber eyes and a mustached mouth, greeted them with a "good morning," pushing on into his own chambers where he flopped his briefcase down on his large desk and sunk into his blue swivel chair. A few hours later, he had immersed himself in paperwork frequently chewing on the lid of his pen and scratching his head in thought.

One of the secretaries entered his office and said, "Sorry to disturb you, Yayah, but Mr. Dawas would like to see you."

He ignored the attractive face of the secretary and disregarded her pleasant smile. He normally would stop for a chat or a joke or two but this time he trudged to his boss's office dreading another encounter. He knocked on the brown door and somewhere deep inside a gruff "come in" commanded him. He cautiously shoved open the door and entered, his expression questioning his superior.

"Well, come closer! Don't stand so far away," Mr. Dawas growled. "I've got a few issues to discuss with you. I consider you intelligent, but, I don't like your honest attitude. Too much honesty is a hindrance. I didn't get where I am just being a nice guy. Furthermore, I must insist you be more assertive towards those under you. Now, I've got a job I need done. If you refuse to perform it, then I'll have to consider your dismissal. If you comply, there will be certain benefits including perhaps an increase in pay as well as a promotion."

Yayah felt the rough yet magnetic glare of his boss. He cast his own eyes downward, breaking the lock. "Sir, if it's about taking advantage of the poor or lying or cheating as you suggested before, then I'm sorry. I can't fulfill your request. It's not my nature to be deceitful. Not for money or power."

He felt his eyes being pulled hypnotically to those of his employer. The fiery glint that had been there before extinguished and Mr. Dawas's eyes grew cold and his face hard as he bellowed, "very well. As you please. But don't say I didn't try to help you. I will consider your words and think about what to do with you. No one is indispensable, no matter how clever. Please leave!" and he motioned to his door with a dismissing hand.

Yayah had expected something like this to happen. He turned on his heels and thrust himself out of the office entrance, his face red with embarrassment. After he returned to his own office, he thought about Mr. Dawas' demands as he toyed with his pen. At length he grabbed his briefcase and stormed out of the building. That was it. He couldn't work for a man he hated. A man he thought unjust and evil. But, nevertheless, Yayah thought of himself as a failure and bent his head in self-accusations as he returned to his home where he lived with some friends of his.

He changed from his stiff business suit to some more casual trousers, scratched a quick note on a piece of paper and left. He took a bus out of suburbia away from the noise and confusion. Seemingly in the middle of nowhere, he stopped the bus and descended to freedom.

He struck out for a small clearing where he whiffed the fresh mountain air. His chest expanded and a smile crept across a face that not long before had burned in resentment. His bag landed on the ground with a thump and Yayah threw himself beside it and leaned against a fir tree. The odours of the forest filled his nostrils and the scolding of nearby birds delighted him. He reached for his bag and pulled out a flute on which he played a melancholy tune to the lavender wild flowers and evergreen trees. A small breeze tossed his curls, giving him a boyish look.

He quit playing his flute, sighed and spoke to the unseen residents of the forest. "Why is it that some people grow rich from the poverty of others? Why must the rich rule the poor and lies govern truth? I thought I could change the world with my degree and hopes but I can't even change one company or even the lives of one man. I must be a misfit of society. Ideas of love, charity, sharing and giving seem to be fashions of the past. Is chivalry dead? I am tired and competition, tired of adulating masses who worship power, money and glory. I want to be simple and honest."

In despair he rose, brushed himself off, clutched his bag and began to walk. The mountain air filled his lungs as he ploughed through thorn scrub with his shoes. At times he bent down and pulled a thistle from his leg and continued on down a winding path towards a green valley.

As he sauntered with refreshed spirits, he thought he heard someone crying. He stopped to listen as a small voice cried, "oh, please, somebody help me!"

He waited to determine the direction of the cry and upon hearing it again, made his way to the sound.

He searched for the voice and then in surprise discovered a young boy hugging a distorted foot. The boy's face was stained with tears and twisted in pain. When he caught sight of Yayah, the boy's countenance brightened. "Hello there," Yayah called. "What's wrong with you boy? Did you hurt your foot?"

"Yes, sir. I was on my way back to my village when I caught my foot on some bramble bushes and tripped. When I tried to get up and walk, my foot hurt so much that I fell down again. Please, can you help me?"

So, the compassionate Yayah huddled the boy on to his back, struggled with his bag and limped onto the village. He was greeted as a hero and the boy was carefully lifted off Yayah's back and taken away to have his foot mended.

Yayah never left the small village. Instead, he fell in love with it and considered it to be a safe haven apart from the din, confusion and greed of the world. He applied his education to the needs of humble honest folk in a place he considered to be his Garden of Eden. On quiet nights if you pass Yayah's village, you may still hear him playing a jolly tune on his silver flute in the midst of the ringing laughter of his happy wife and children.

As for his greedy boss, God doesn't forget the bad deeds a person performs. He became severely paralysed and was unable to continue his life of crime and evil. He now sits in a lonely wheelchair attended by one faithful servant shut away from the honest and pure pleasures of life.

Rising middle class ready to challenge feudal landlords

By Kathy Gannon
The Associated Press

MORO, Pakistan — Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif is the hope of a rising middle class eager to overcome powerful feudal landlords and narrow the huge gap between rich and poor.

The 41-year-old industrialist, who became Pakistan's fifth prime minister in November, is a self-made multimillionaire whose credentials alone would have offended the landed gentry, who classed businessmen with common labourers.

Decades of feudal control have kept most of the 110 million Pakistanis illiterate and landless, confined to poverty-stricken villages.

In rural Pakistan, development has meant little more than naked lighthouses, shabby clinics built of cinder block, primitive gas connections and some schools generally for boys only.

The average couple has at least half a dozen children as insurance against poverty and loneliness in old age. Landlords encourage large families as a ready source of cheap labour.

"Feudals want to keep people ignorant, but their power is slipping," said Ghulam Hussein Soomro, a labourer in Sind province.

Landlords traditionally have manipulated short-lived civilian governments and the army, which has ruled Pakistan for more than half the 43 years since independence from Britain in 1947. Their domain stretches across much of fertile Punjab province in the east and the rugged southern province of Sind.

With the growth of the middle class, a slow change has begun in the power structure. Professionals, businessmen, liberal intellectuals and technocrats now hold the most powerful government posts.

The landowners had absolute control until one of their own, the late Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, exhorting labourers in the 1970s to demand their rights. The feudal masters decided whether their workers would be educated, approved marriages and, when seeking office, received the votes of those dependent on them.

Sharif has promised an industrial revolution, offering tax breaks and incentives for investment in an effort to wrest control of the economy from the landlords.

Mir Khan, 65, left school after three years and has tiled the same plot since childhood. It belongs to one of Pakistan's most powerful landlords, former Prime Minister Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, who owns about 25,000 acres (10,000 hectares).

"My grandfather farmed the land for Jatoi and so did my father," Khan said.

In a narrow alley winding among rundown buildings in

Moro, Mohammad Aslam sat cross-legged among rich silks and handwoven cotton, talking about feudalism and its future. The shopkeeper makes a better living than most Pakistanis, who earn an average of about \$400 a year.

Aslam said proudly that his generation is different from those before, and that he dreams of a better life for his son. Such a dream would have been pointless when Aslam was a boy.

"Change will come, but it will take time," he said. "More people today know about politics. Maybe someday my son can be in politics."

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the father of Benazir Bhutto, who was dismissed as prime minister last year, has been credited with awakening the poor.

Before he was overthrown in a 1977 military coup — he was hanged two years later — Bhutto urged the poor to demand their rights to food,

clothing and housing.

"People believed his slogans and... he made people believe in themselves," a Pakistani political analyst said, on condition of anonymity.

"For the first time, even servants believed they could demand their rights. The master of the house was no longer the owner of their soul."

Bhutto seemed an unlikely candidate for such a role. He was one of the largest landholders in Sind province, with about 10,000 acres (4,000 hectares).

His legacy was passed to Benazir, the self-proclaimed "poor people's sister" who, in December 1988, became the first woman leader of a modern Muslim nation.

In October, three months after her government was dismissed for alleged corruption, she and some of the country's biggest landlords lost decisively in national

elections.

Many Pakistanis were stunned by the defeat of names that had been synonymous with power.

"Now people have some sense," said Mohammad Hashim, another shopkeeper. "It's a sign of the times that people vote against the feudals."

Jatoi's family said they were humbled by the 1988 election, won by Ms. Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party, because they did not receive unquestioned support from their workers.

"We lost... because we thought it was a sure thing," said Jatoi's daughter, Shireen. "You can't take it for granted anymore. You have to campaign."

Before the October election, Jatoi was out kissing babies, shaking hands and making promises. He won a parliament seat.

These days, "we give respect and we get respect," his daughter said.

so the passengers couldn't see them." Five years ago, Shah broke with tradition and took his children and grandchildren to Karachi, a bustling port 240 kilometres to the south.

"Now everyone wants some freedom and we're giving them some, slowly, slowly," he said.

Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi a former prime minister who owns about 25,000 acres (10,000 hectares) in Sind, has educated his daughters and they have married outside the family, but within their social class.

Jatoi's associates say such liberalism is a political liability.

"Don't say Jatoi educates his daughters," a spokesman said, on condition his name not be used. "He'll lose votes."

From cradle to grave, some women lead cloistered lives

By Kathy Gannon
The Associated Press

HALA, Pakistan — The untended graves of 70 women who were shrouded in life and are hidden in death lie behind a weather-beaten gate that is locked and bolted.

They belong to the Makhdooms, a religious Muslim family whose authority is unchallenged in this dusty town of southern Sind province, where feudal landlords reign supreme.

Makhdoom men are revered, believed to be descendants of the Prophet Mohammad. The women are confined to their homes, built of dried mud and brick and enclosed by walls that are 20 feet (6 metres) high and topped with jagged glass.

Most feudal families in

Pakistan place restrictions on their women, but the most stringent are imposed by those with religious standing, like the Makhdooms.

Down through the generations, little has changed for Makhdoom women.

They lead a cloistered existence from birth and will see no male except their father and brothers. The women will not marry because there are no male first cousins, nor will they leave their homes except at death.

Even for burial, they are wrapped in voluminous shawls and carried to their graves after midnight so no prying eyes will see.

Many Pakistani marriages are between cousins. For the Makhdooms, a marriage must be between first cousins.

Tradition and religion often are cited as reasons for the

unyielding treatment of women in Pakistan's powerful feudal families. Land is another.

"It's just the land," a follower of the Makhdooms said, on condition of anonymity. "They don't want to have to give away any land when they marry off a sister."

Makhdoom Rafique Uz Zaman, 37, said his five sisters — and perhaps his eldest brother's three daughters — would be the last women in the family to live cloistered lives.

"It's oppressive," he said. "As far as I'm concerned, I'm going to marry my daughters."

Time has passed the sisters by, he said, and "it's their bad luck."

The youngest sister is in her early 30s, the eldest in her late

40s. Women friends say the Makhdoom women are strikingly beautiful, with shimmering, waist-long hair.

A friend who gave her name only as Aysha said conversations with the sisters are monitored and such thought-provoking topics as politics are forbidden for fear they will be incited to demand freedom.

"We are not allowed to talk about anything stimulating and we are only allowed two hours at the most with them," said Aysha, a medical student whose father frequently rebukes her for being outspoken.

Except for freedom, the Makhdoom brothers say their sisters have nearly everything a woman could want.

"They have... television, video cassette recorders, radio; they can even cook,"

said another brother, Khaleeq Uz Zaman.

There are said to be at least 2,000 women in Sind whose lives are seriously restricted by feudal rules.

Some may eventually marry, but even then will leave their homes only rarely, covered from head to toe by billowing, tent-like veils.

"This is the most difficult tradition to change," said Sayed Nasir Shah, an 80-year-old religious leader also believed to be a direct descendant of the Prophet. "The world is going so fast. We are still so backward."

"My two younger brothers argue with me," he said. "They have girls that are still unmarried and not allowed out of the house. When the airplanes would fly overhead, the women would run inside

the house and lock the door."

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'How was your exam'

By Maha Addasi

What is the number one question this week, besides inquiring about the Gulf war?

It's the question posed by parents to their high-school children:

"How did you do in that exam?"

If you answer "O.K.," it is not enough. When your parents want to know how you did in an exam, they want details. And much to your dismay, "O.K." is by no means detailed enough. So your parents start to zoom in on you with picky inquiries.

"O.K., good or O.K. barely passing?" They ask.

"I think I did alright," you answer. That's the cue for a full-fledged third degree session, because you being vague like this makes your parents very desperate for answers.

"I can't believe this," your parents start grumbling. "Here we were providing him with all the privacy he needed to study, tried our best to keep anything and anyone from distracting him and he won't even answer one question."

"Now, really, how did you do?" They badger.

"O.K., alright! I want to study for my next exam," you say. This is when your parents start to panic.

"Oh my God, he must have done awful," they say starting to think of alternative schools, different career plans for their 12-year-old.

Let me remind you students that there is no wrong answer to this question posed by parents. But it goes without saying depending on how you answer it, you can be categorised into different groups.

The first group is the one where the student when asked, immediately, much to the pride and honour of his or her parents, dives for the main point concerning the exam.

"I messed up," he says just as both parents inhale deeply, and lean against each other for physical support so they won't faint.

"I put down one wrong answer, and I'm so mad at myself because I had answered correctly the first time and I went back and erased it."

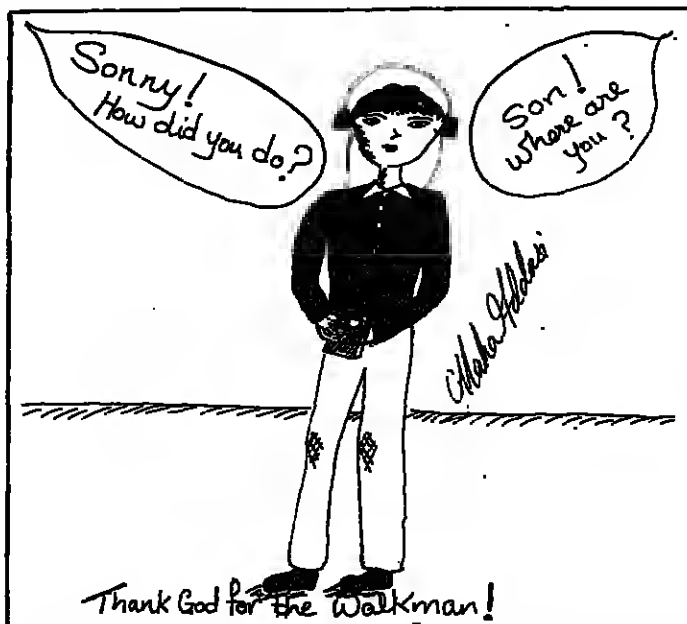
"I think I'll get only 98 per cent in this final," the kid says knowing full well he will probably spend the rest of his natural life reminding himself of this mistake.

The parents having recovered from their initial shock now have blood seeping back into their veins. They are now at a mental high, but their senses sure got a roller-coaster ride out of this incident.

I think parents know that by asking their children questions like this they are exposing their health on a silver platter to a sledgehammer provided by their child's answers. It is self-inflicted pain, yet parents continue to ask the question all over the world, in Chinese, in French, in Eskimo. You name it. Call it sadism if you will, because parents don't give up asking.

The second group includes people who know their parents very well and don't want them to hold a court session, these kids' way of answering their parents comes in scenario form. The kids get off the school bus and come dashing for the front door and blast through it saying:

"I did so well. I can't believe how easy the exam was."



Now even if the kid did not do that well, by saying that he did, he stalls his parents for a few days until the report card appears.

The kid feels it is better that way because when he checked with friends over the phone it dawned on him that he had not done as well as he thought and he didn't want his parents to get deep on him with questions like "why didn't you do well?"

The question is how do you prepare the parents for the jolt they will get when they receive the report card, especially now that they are all nice and relaxed because their darling kid has most definitely scored full marks?

Then you have a third group of people who come in and tell their parents "I don't know how I did."

"What do you mean you don't know. You took the exam, didn't you?" comes the torpedo answer.

All the way through exams, the kid belonging to this group does not usually want to cause his parents any heart attacks, but in all honesty does not know how well or how badly he has done. So on the final day of tests he comes home to eat and goes out with his friends to have some fun, while his parents stay home worrying themselves sick with "what it's."

The most worrisome question is:

"What if Sam flunks, what will people think?"

Then the report card comes and everything is clarified. Those who didn't do too well are lectured about the best ways for improving their grade point average. While the good kids get a lecture on how proud their parents are of them, as well as lecture on how they could improve their grade point average.

Either way parents are parents and when the next batch of exams come around they will ask exactly the same questions. But next time you, the students, will be more prepared for their questioning. You will treat the questions like you would in any exam.

The Grévin Museum has its second wind

By Sylvaine Luckx

THE atmosphere is close. Josephine Baker, balanced unstably on a shelf, looks through you. Jean-Michel Jarre's head faces the wall, while Georges Marchais grins a frozen smile. All over the place, armless hands are clenched and bodiless heads droop. Handfuls of hair lie about on a table.

The Grévin waxworks museum is awe-inspiring. Once the visitor has recovered from his initial shock, he becomes fascinated by the techniques and know-how of the artists.

First of all, the faces are carved in clay before being moulded in beeswax. The hair, which is real, is implanted one strand at a time. The careful make-up (with the corner of a mouth turned downwards, and the eyes lit up) gives life to the wax statue. "It takes two to three months to create a figure," Jean Heydecker, the director of promotion, explains. The work is demanding and guarantees the reputation of this hundred-year-old firm.

Indeed, it was in 1882 that Arthur Meyer, a journalist and the founder of "Le Gaulois," joined forces with Alfred Grévin, a draughtsman, in order to create the Grévin Museum.

A year later, Gabriel Thomas who has created the company which runs the Eiffel Tower and the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, gave the museum an economic structure which would enable it to develop. The Grévin Museum company is thus the smallest business quoted on the Stock Exchange. Year by year, its vocation asserts itself, whether it be to reflect history or to present current events.

Even if it has no ambition to compete with Madame Tussaud's in London (which covers an area of 10,000 square metres, compared with a the Grévin Museum's 4,000 square metres), it is a "typically Parisian institution," as defined by Bernard Gabriel Thomas, its managing director.

Every year 550,000 visitors are filled with wonder at Jacques Chirac's authentic smile. General de Gaulle's pout and Garry Kasparov's knitted brows. Generations of children have shuddered before Marat, assassinated in his bath. But George Bush, Helmut Kohl, Serge Gainsbourg and Philippe Bouvard also have their place in the museum, situated in Boulevard Montmartre. It is more than an honour to be in the Musée Grévin. It means one has made it.

This does not prevent Bernard Gabriel Thomas from declaring, "We have no problem of reputation. We have a problem of image, the image of a business which is a bit archaic and a bit dusty." This great-grandson of Gabriel Thomas's left a brilliant career at the Paribas bank to run the Musée Grévin company, with passion. Since its creation, the Grévin museum has always been administered by the Thomas family.

How did he manage the change? He smiles. "Since my earliest years, I have been steeped in the Musée Grévin atmosphere. I used to spend my Thursday afternoons in the workshops. As a child, I saw all the famous personalities come and go." But he adds, "It is a challenge to find oneself the chairman and managing director of a small or medium-sized firm as famous as the Musée Grévin, at the age of 38." It is a firm which has to be managed and made to progress.

This can be done by updating its image and making it a place where things happen regularly, for instance by having the 700th edition of the "Apostrophes" literary television programme broadcast from there, or organising the discussion between Joxe and Chirac for the municipal elections, at the museum.

It can also be achieved by diversifying its activities. Thus other museums with the "Grévin" label have been created in France: in Paris, the "Forum des Halles" (shopping and culture centre created on the site of the former wholesale market), but also on Mont Saint-Michel island, in Lourdes, in La Rochelle, in Tours and in Dijon. Many famous figures have been brought to life in an appropriate setting by the Grévin craftsmen: the Dukes of Burgundy, Joan of Arc, the girls of La Rochelle, Eleanor of Aquitaine, etc., in the Royal Castle of Tours or the vaulted cellars of Burgundy.

"Another way of boosting the firm's image," Bernard Gabriel Thomas adds, "is by branching out in the leisure sector. The Musée Grévin must not content itself with remaining good in the wax-work area." The spearhead of this policy is the "France Miniatures" project (together with other partners). The idea is a leisure park containing 150 models of French historical monuments, on a scale of 1/30.

This fits in with the Grévin ethic: "Our slot is history" and the philosophy of its present director: "We make the Grévin Museum live and move every day." — L'Actualité en France.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Thursday, Jan 24

1634 — Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II secretly deprives Duke of Wallenstein of his command and declares him a traitor.

1798 — Irish rebellion breaks out.

1848 — James Marshall finds gold nugget in U.S. state of California, touching off gold rush.

1907 — First boy scout troop is organised by Sir Robert Baden-Powell in England.

1924 — Petrograd is renamed Leningrad in honour of founder of Soviet Union.

1946 — U.N. General Assembly votes to create U.N. Atomic Energy Commission.

1967 — South Vietnam's Premier Nguyen Cao Ky runs into wild anti-war demonstration on visit to New Zealand.

1973 — U.S. negotiator Henry Kissinger says Vietnam peace agreement worked out in Paris also means end to fighting in Laos and Cambodia. Hanoi's de Lac Tho calls agreement "a great victory for the Vietnamese people."

1986 — Guerrillas advance into Ugandan capital of Kampala as army opposition crumbles, pushing military government to edge of collapse.

1989 — Rescuers struggle against heavy smoke and toxic gas to reach at least 100 miners trapped inside collapsed gold mine in southern Peru.

1990 — Avianca airliner runs out of fuel and crashes on Long Island, New York, killing 73 and injuring 85.

1991 — British sovereignty is proclaimed over Hong Kong.

1985 — The Mahdi takes Khartoum in Sudan, and British General Charles Gordon is killed.

1931 — Mahatma Gandhi is released from prison in India for discussions with government.

1931 — Polish diet proclaims independence of Poland, deposes the Romanovs.

1944 — Battle for Cassino begins in Italy in World War II.

1952 — Crisis arises between France and Germany over administration of the Saar.

1959 — Britain signs trade pact with East Germany.

1962 — African heads of state of Monrovia group (Liberia, Togo, Nigeria and Cameroon) issue charter for pan-African cooperation.

1975 — Sheikh Mujibur Rahman abolishes parliamentary rule in Bangladesh and assumes absolute powers as president.

1983 — Japanese government lodges strong protest with Soviet Union over Soviet military buildup in Far East, including possible transfer of intermediate-range missiles from Europe to Siberia.

1986 — Voyager 2, sweeping to within 51,000 miles (81,000 kilometres) of Uranus, discovers a 10th ring, a 15th moon and a north pole that angles downward.

1989 — Cambodia's Premier Hun Sen has rejected proposal for an international peacekeeping force in his country.

1990 — Mustafa II succeeds as Sultan of Turkey on death of Ahmad II.

1822 — Greek independence is proclaimed formally.

1865 — Treaty between Spain and Peru virtually recognised Peru's independence.

1914 — Haiti's President

1934 — Germany signs 10-year nonaggression pact with Poland.

1942 — First U.S. expeditionary force arrives in Europe in World War II, with troops put ashore in Northern Ireland.

1950 — India proclaimed a republic within the Commonwealth.

1952 — Famed Shepherd's Hotel in Cairo, Egypt, is burned during riots by mobs demanding British withdrawal from the Suez.

1957 — Kashmir constitution for incorporation with India goes into effect.

1977 — United States charges that arrest of human rights activists in Czechoslovakia violates 1975 Helsinki Agreement between Communist and Western nations.

1986 — South Yemeni insurgents convene cabinet meeting under interim president Heider Al Attas in Aden.

1987 — U.S. President Ronald Reagan vows he will make no concessions to Lebanese terrorists, and warns Americans to get out of Lebanon.

1989 — Sri Lankan government puts troops on alert throughout nation following violence that left 45 people dead in 24 hours.

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Oreste abdicates during revolt, and U.S. Marines land to preserve order.

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1947 — Regional advisory commission for the Pacific is established.

1950 — United States agrees to provide arms to NATO members.

1964 — France establishes diplomatic relations with China.

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1973 — Accords are signed in Paris ending Vietnam War.

1987 — Fear grows for safety of Anglican Church envoy Terry Waite, who vanished previous week in Lebanon while trying to negotiate release of foreign hostages.

1988 — West German man is kidnapped in Syrian-controlled West Beirut by gunmen, some of them in police uniforms.

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Weekend Crossword

SNACKING AT THE MOVIES

By I. Miller

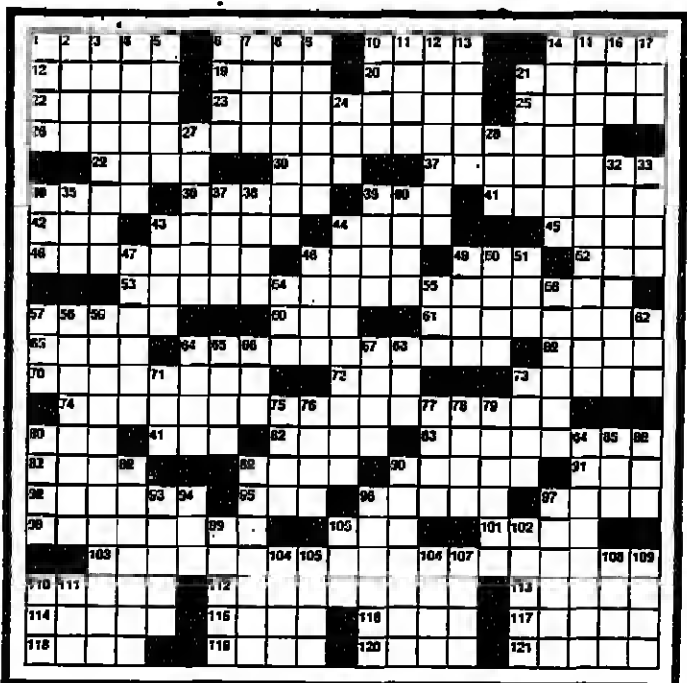
ACROSS
1 Runaways
6 Good
10 Conch
14 Goshawk
18 Muslim scholars
19 London gallery
20 Malay legend
21 Stage
22 Stratched out
23 Ponged from
24 Borneo
25 Cabaret
26 Arcade film
27 Brainsome
28 Darts (Asian)
29 (Irish)
31 Weather map
32 Cote occupant
33 Luminescent

DOWN
1 Kind of gun
2 Jai
3 Ignition
4 Cornish tows
5 Jai's in
6 Thompson
7 Puff of
8 Pole
9 From people
10 Christen ones
11 Self-satisfied
12 but the end
13 that black
14 Pithbladder
15 Bell
16 One's dangle
17 Gaudy action
18 Inoue
19 Egypt debt
20 Snap
21 Videobest

Diagramless 1919, By James Barrick

ACROSS
1 Hard work
6 Hallowed
11 Small
12 Sea duck
13 Oppowering
14 Look a long
15 Time
16 Remarks
20 Time of year
21 One's

DOWN
1 Circuits around
2 Hat
3 Small — the
4 sub-pro-
5 — like
6 Leave out
7 The action
8 Party's girl
9 Kindled
10 Dutch cheese
11 Millions
12 Cold with three
13's



Last Week's Cryptograms

- Parents and kids always enjoy huge fireworks display as July Fourth highlight.
- Usually, empty stomachs are not very conducive at all to heady patriotism.
- Bel you any child raised strictly by the book is usually his folks' first edition.
- That fitness buff boasts of being tough.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. I XQBTRY QC FOYS CQTXV EN MQL I TVRVS
FBL I MYFAYBNS IMS GYTA LYRWQTITA
TVWTEGV.

—By Gordon Miller

2. JOMIY SWEATING WET EG SUSA ESN SWNJY
YU KMY JLOONI WNMV MGT JLGKLG.

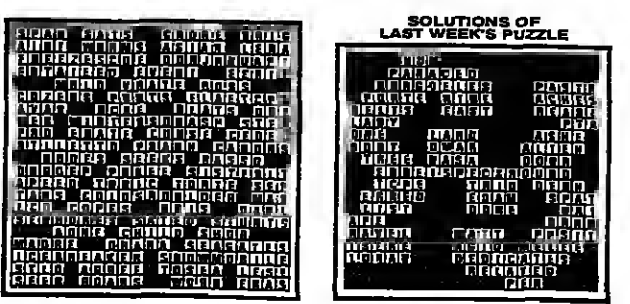
—By Luis H. Jones

3. AMUSE WE ZOUSE RUSE PIK ROUSE YU
QLEUSE WK NEUSE GUQ ZMIAN QUSE PL
PIK UGYLE KPUSE.

—By Ed Huddleson

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—By Norice Rhoades



SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE

B.C.



We apologise to our readers for failing to publish the JTV Channel 2 Weekly Preview in this week's Weekender. This is due to Jordan Television's inability to provide us with it before the Weekender deadline.

A disorderly but necessary historical exhibition in Dresden

By Peter Hans Göpfert

DRESDEN is not a random choice as the site of this exhibition. The Kupferstichkabinett (copper-engraving cabinet) there has assembled the largest collection in the former east Germany of works by artists who left the country. Werner Schmidt, the present managing director of Dresden's State Art Collections, who, as courageous head of the Kupferstichkabinett, suffered personal harassment, restriction and obstruction in his activity at the hands of the regime, which he had to craftily under-run, recalls the pride of Russian colleagues if they had one or two Chagalls in their collection. The first step towards a historical registration of what the organisers call an "out-rageous historical phenomenon" in no way met with broad approval in the initial stage. Consequently, the secretariat of the Artists Association can only be accorded "moderate thanks" in the quest for the names of artists who had fled over the past 40 years, who had stayed on in the West, who had applied for an exit permit or who had been forced out by dire threats.

In this context, however, there were lists in existence: in the case of someone applying for an exit permit, his works were literally removed from the walls of public collections and none of his further works purchased for a prolonged period. Using a

"snowball system", Schmidt and his colleagues got 650 names of artists together and documented them with biographies and bibliographic references. 170 of them are now represented by 360 works at the exhibition. Many of them, of course, went to the Federal Republic or West Berlin at an early date: Bernhard Heiliger in 1951, Gotthard Graubner and Günther Uecker in 1953, Klaus Staack in 1956, and George Baselitz a year later; he was expelled from his higher education institution in Berlin on the grounds that he was "socio-politically immature."

The list of harassment and rejections, changes, closing of exhibitions and withdrawal of catalogues is endless. Lack of "Vital Socialist consciousness" and "betrayal of the working class," objections to alleged religious or symbolic tendencies were the grounds for the rejection of designs for a commissioned picture and the discontinuation of work by Ulrich Eisenfeld. A.R. Penck had difficulties with the State Security Service from 1969 onwards: His picture were confiscated, membership of the Artists Association was denied him. Achim Freyer, who designed the stage set for "Clavigo" at the Deutsches Theatre in 1970, was forbidden to set foot in the building or perform after the premiere—because of "convergent pictorial language." Sieghard Pohl was several times denied par-

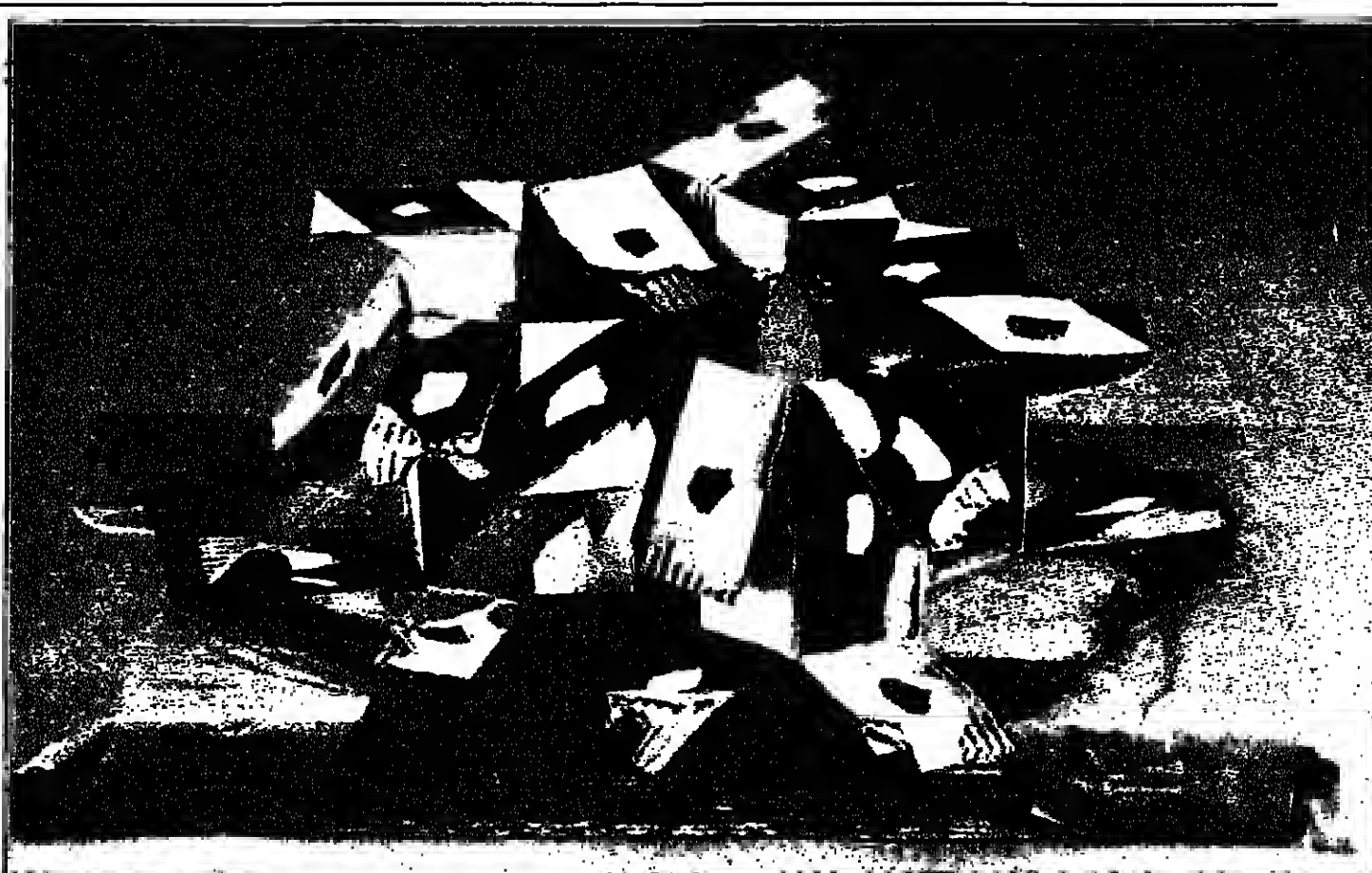
ticipations in exhibitions — shortly before they opened — because his works did not coincide with the "creative principles of Socialist Realism" and displayed "no party standpoint for the GDR." When Cornelia Schleime moved to West Berlin in 1984, her home was emptied by the "Department of the Interior" and all her works of art confiscated: they are still missing to this day. Because he did not hold his tongue about the former GDR whilst in exile, Roger Loewig was able at no time to return to the GDR on a visit; during a journey to an exhibition of his works in Warsaw some years ago, he was hauled out of the train at Friedrichstraße Station, East Berlin. More than a few of the artists on exhibition were thrown into prison on the flimsiest of pretexts in many cases. Sieghard Pohl was sentenced to 22 months in jail because he had endangered the security of the former GDR through a passport offence when he went to Italy on West German travel documents. The geographical and political restriction, the lack of opportunity to look around the world — so essential for artists — made staying in the GDR intolerable for many.

This exhibition is quite deliberately a historical, and not an artistic project; as a consequence, of course, some artists declined to take part, such as Hans Scheib, for

instance (some of whose works are nevertheless included in what is, after all, a documentary show). If you like, the exhibition could also be described as disorderly. The hanging and placing has not been based on any form of stylistic or aesthetic criteria; the point in time when the artist left the country determines the chronological sequence.

There are many familiar names at the exhibition, including such prominent artists as Georg Baselitz and Gerhard Richter. There are also many, of course, whom visitors have never heard of.

One can regard the exhibition as food for thought. And because the reason for flight or leaving the country was frequently a fundamental rejection of the system, rather than the style, the organisers have not merely fallen back on "main works," but displayed pictures from their own collection, which are representative, as it were, of the artists' names. It goes without saying that many of the exhibits can hardly lay claim to being outstanding or representative in respect of the artist concerned. But more than a few of the pictures have their own history. One of them, for instance, had to be taken off the wall whenever an official delegation came; another only made its way to the West by being cut up into sections. Yet others, such as those by A.R. Penck, were con-



Karlheinz Schäfer: "Närrischer Bau," 1971 on show at the exhibition in Dresden.

ated. And, in the case of Rainer Bonar's "Grablegung des Soldaten" (Soldier's Burial), it was only noticed, when Kurt Hager was standing in front of the picture, that the soldier was none other than — Wolf Biermann.

In a more general sense, the exhibition is anxious to

high-light "voting with the feet," the mass exodus which created the basic situation, exerted economic and political pressure — enabling a bloodless revolution to take place internally. But this exhibition cannot be the last word on this subject. There will undoubtedly be "ramifications and refinements" of

subject matter. It may be a source of satisfaction for individual artists, for committed lovers of art and academics — who themselves were obstructed and subjected to chicanery — that this exhibition is now taking place on this spot; but no-one will get the idea that this might be a sort of "compensation." The

harm — artistic and human — cannot be made good: but it can be retained in one's consciousness. Exhibitions such as this, however, show — for future museum strategy, too — that there can be no suggestion of a "GDR Art Department" since it is impossible to sort out mathematically who stayed and who went. — IN-Oress.

Health & Medicine

JORDAN TIMES, THURSDAY-FRIDAY, JULY 26-27, 1990

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'White pipe' drug mix menaces South Africa

By Anthony Barker
Reuters

JOHANNESBURG — Justin is fighting a five-year addiction to southern Africa's preferred road to drug oblivion, the potent local marijuana spiced with a sleeping pill called Mandrax.

"I thought, please help me, somebody. You need it so bad you do anything. I'm not the sort of person who can just rob anybody at gunpoint, but I did," said the fair-haired 19-year-old.

According to latest United Nations figures cited by police, in 1987 law enforcement agencies seized 16 million doses of Mandrax worldwide, of which 15 million

were in South Africa.

In Namibia, Zambia, Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland, "bit mainly" in South Africa, heat-calcined hands are stuffing marijuana and white "buttons" into glass bottle-neck pipes.

"You take a blow and everything goes wooow," Justin recalled in an interview.

"You start coughing, your muscles go all lame. You can't help spitting. Druggies pass around a spit bucket."

"It's the worst drug, it is disgusting," he said.

Mandrax is a trade name for pills containing Methaqualone, banned in some mid-1970s.

It remained legal in India and Pakistan. Some members

of South Africa's ethnic Indian community cashed in on the difference in price in Bombay and black market rates at home.

"Then some great mind tried to crush the tablets mixed with marijuana and smoke it — and got a far bigger kick," said Dr. Sylvain De Miranda, director of the state-funded South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence.

"This became the notorious white pipe of southern Africa."

Mandrax fills a niche occupied elsewhere by cocaine or by heroin, which are still rare but beginning to spread.

De Miranda said the white

pipe first spread among Indians and whites, who could afford the high price. Then it took hold among the so-called coloured (mixed-race) people of Cape province, where marijuana abuse was already widespread.

Mandrax is still mainly brought in from India although it has now been banned there and in Pakistan, police say.

In November Zimbabwe police seized a shipment from Bombay of 963 kilogrammes, with an estimated street value of \$15 million.

"We are very grateful. There is no doubt in my mind that it was destined for South Africa," Lieutenant Colonel John Wright, head of the

Police Narcotics Bureau in Pretoria, told Reuters.

South African police say much of the drug is brought overland across vast land borders from African states, usually by blacks.

According to De Miranda, this avenue will inevitably lead to a spread in its use across Africa — it is beginning to be seen in Kenya — and among South Africa's black majority.

Pete, a 35-year-old of Asian origin, recalls buying Indian Mandrax in Botswana, where he handed cash to a dealer, then held a hostage at gunpoint to ensure he was not cheated.

According to Pete, who ran three "butlers" selling

pills for him in Cape province, several major suppliers are now black.

"It used to be the Indians. Now if I want a rush of buttons I go see a black guy 'cos they are the ones making it," said Pete, who like Justin says he wants to stop and gave a false name.

De Miranda said Mandrax for South Africa is increasingly being manufactured inside the country.

In 1987 police closed a major factory near Johannesburg which was supposed to be a plant producing fertiliser from milk.

Unscrupulous dealers are supplying deadly fakes, disguised as the crude pills. "Guys just keel over after

a pipe. You say wow, what a rush. Then you see the guy is dead," said Justin.

Wright declined to estimate the value of the trade, worth many millions of dollars on the street.

The tablets now cost users about eight rand (\$3) each but sank to three (\$1) when the big internal factory was operating in 1987, then rose to 22 rand (\$9) when there was a shortage.

De Miranda predicts frightening social costs as Mandrax spreads among the 28 million blacks, whose racially-segregated communities are dislocated by poverty, crumbling traditional values, soaring crime and increasingly, by AIDS.

"What is needed is massive preventative education — at lifestyle level, not just about drugs, alcohol, sex, but the lot. It should be aimed at the whole school-age population, including the many children who do not go to school," he said.

"The facilities for alcohol and drug problem treatment in the black community are totally inadequate," he added.

On the front line are 750 narcotics detectives country-wide, a senior police officer told state-run radio last year. Wright would not give a total, but said: "There are not enough. Manpower is always in shortage, we could do with more."

Rice bran oil lowers cholesterol dramatically in early tests

By Paul Raeburn
The Associated Press

SAVANNAH, Georgia — Rice bran oil has the unique ability to lower harmful cholesterol levels up to 30 per cent without reducing the so-called good cholesterol that protects against heart attacks, a researcher said.

Tests with animals show that rice bran oil can even raise good cholesterol at the same time it produces these dramatic drops in harmful cholesterol, said biochemist Robert Nicolosi, director of the Division of Cardiovascular research at the University of Lowell in Massachusetts.

"The rice bran oil may be unique in lowering LDL without lowering HDL," Nicolosi said at a science writers' symposium sponsored by the American Heart Association.

LDL, or low-density lipoprotein, contributes to hardening of the arteries and resulting heart disease. HDL, or high-density lipoprotein, the good form of cholesterol, removes harmful cholesterol from the bloodstream and reduces the risk of heart disease.

Rice bran oil also contains substances that help block the deposit of cholesterol in

side arteries, Nicolosi said. Nicolosi is concerned that the preliminary studies showing the value of rice bran oil could trigger another frenzy like the one that followed initial reports on the benefits of oat bran.

"I've asked the rice industry to go slow," he said. "We

don't want another oat bran fiasco."

A study suggesting that oat bran could lower cholesterol led to the rapid appearance of oat bran in crackers, cereals and many other foods, long before the benefits of oat bran were completely clear.

A more recent study appeared to cast doubt on the benefits of oat bran, but in fact it was inconclusive, said Dr. Virgil Brown, an authority on diet and heart disease and the president-elect of the American Heart Association. Brown said he was intrigued by Nicolosi's findings.

"The effects look interesting," he said. "A great deal more research needs to be done" to determine how beneficial rice bran oil is in humans and which people will benefit most, he said.

Researchers have long known that unsaturated fats can reduce levels of harmful

LDL cholesterol in the bloodstream. But those fats also reduce, to some degree, levels of HDL cholesterol, Nicolosi said.

Rice bran oil is rich in chemicals called unsaponifiable oils. These substances appear to be responsible for rice bran oil's effects, Nicolosi said.

Nicolosi fed one group of monkeys a healthy diet containing rice bran oil. Another group ate a typical American diet, containing more fat than nutritionists recommend.

Depending upon the amount of rice bran oil the monkeys were given, Nicolosi

found drops of 20 per cent to 30 per cent in their harmful LDL cholesterol levels. In some cases he found a slight increase in HDL.

If rice bran oil turns out to have the same effect in humans, people would need to consume less than 2 tablespoons of the oil a day to get the benefits, Nicolosi said.

Rice bran oil is widely used in Japan and is available in some supermarkets in the United States, Nicolosi said. He said there is "absolutely no risk whatsoever" in choosing to use rice bran oil on salads or in cooking. It is colourless and tasteless, he said.

Rice bran oil seems to accomplish its beneficial effects in several ways, Nicolosi said.

Some of its unsaponifiable oils reduce absorption of cholesterol in the diet. Others slow the production of cholesterol in the liver.

Still others block the chemical process of oxidation, a chemical process which, among many other things, accelerates the deposit of cholesterol inside arteries.

Rice bran oil has five to 10 times as much of these unsaponifiable oils as do other forms of edible oil, Nicolosi said.

'AIDS vaccine proves safe, but will it work?'

By A.J. Hostetler
The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The first AIDS vaccine to be tested on humans is safe, but its effectiveness has not yet been proven, researchers said Tuesday.

The vaccine, Vaxsyn, was injected into 36 healthy adult volunteers in 1988 at six hospitals as part of the federal AIDS vaccine clinical trials network. All 36 showed some immune response, according to the report in the recent *Annals of Internal Medicine*, published by the American College of Physicians.

"This is the first completed study of looking at the immune response and toxicity in humans" of an AIDS vac-

cine, said the lead author, Dr. Raphael Dolin of the University of Rochester.

In an accompanying editorial, a researcher said that because of the pressing need for preventive measures against the AIDS virus, scientists may have to go ahead with development of vaccines that may not block infection but could prevent or significantly delay the onset of the disease.

Vaxsyn, developed by Microgenetics Inc., of West Haven, Connecticut, was previously tested in animals, including mice and monkeys.

Twenty-four volunteers received four vaccinations, and 12 received three. A group of 36 other volunteers received a hepatitis B vaccine or a placebo.

Side effects of Vaxsyn were few and slight, the researchers said. Eight volunteers experienced a slight fever after receiving the vaccine. Four said they had headaches or felt sluggish, and two said they felt pain at the injection site, according to the study.

The researchers found that the vaccine surprisingly prompted a double immune response in the volunteers. Not only did they develop antibodies to the AIDS virus, they also produced immune system "killer T cells" specific to the AIDS virus.

"This gives us some room for cautious optimism," Dolin said.

"We ought to be able to come up with a vaccine that will work."

In a second stage of test-

velope is called GP160.

The theory is that the body's immune system will react to GP160 and develop antibodies, which would trigger an immune response in the body should there be contact with the HIV virus.

Because of the virus' changeability, researchers say the best candidate for a final vaccine would be a "cocktail" based on several of the HIV proteins.

But that goal may be "beyond reach, at least in the short-term," Virologist Dani Bolognesi of Duke University wrote in the editorial.

Research should turn to developing vaccines that could offer some degree of protection — either before, during or after exposure to HIV, he said.

ing, studies of the vaccine at doses up to eight times stronger are under way in about 30 volunteers to see how strong an immune response the vaccine can produce.

The first volunteers' immune response will last for a few years, most likely under a decade, Dolin said.

Because current tests for AIDS measure the presence of antibodies to the virus rather than the virus itself, the volunteers will temporarily test positive. To prevent the discrimination against those with AIDS, each volunteer was given an identification card to verify participation in the vaccine trial.

The trials were conducted at the University of Rochester, Vanderbilt University, Baylor College of Medicine,

University of Maryland, Johns Hopkins, and Marshall University.

The AIDS vaccine clinical trial network, run by the National Institute of Allergies and Infectious Diseases, is testing six vaccines in humans for safety and the ability to prompt antibodies to HIV.

One of the biggest problems in developing an AIDS vaccine is that the virus changes parts of its molecular identity as it replicates and spreads. That makes it difficult to develop a vaccine that will recognise the virus despite its altered "face."

Vaxsyn is a genetically engineered synthetic protein matching one protein in the envelope, or skin, of the virus. That part of the en-

Giverny, the dream garden of Monet

Camille Hérison

PARIS — A ray of sunshine turns Claude Monet's gardens into a shimmering palette of a thousand colours. This is Giverny, north of Paris, between the regions of Ile-de-France and Normandy, a stone's throw from the Seine. Opening onto the flowerbeds, the house, with its pink re-dressed facade and green shutters, where the master of Impressionism lived, received visitors from all over the world.

Monet was 43 years old, in 1883, when he discovered Giverny from the window of the departmental train which snaked along the river. "This is where I wish to settle in order to work amid the flowers," he said to Alice Hochstedt, who was to become his second wife.

The painter bought the low house standing in a hectare of land for 22,000 francs and he undertook to arrange it to his taste. He built greenhouses and turned the barn into a studio. There, smoking one cigarette after another (forty a day), he worked and received his friends Cézanne,

Renoir, Sisley, Pissarro, the critic Gustave Geffroy, the novelist Octave Mirbeau and especially the politician Georges Clemenceau.

With his head gardener, Monet designed the "Clos Normand" in the French style with well mapped out paths. This has now been faithfully restored and offers the eye a profusion of plants with colours changing according to the seasons. In spring, there is an apotheosis of yellow with daffodils, narcissuses and tulips. Then the azaleas, rhododendrons, wisterias and lilacs burst into bloom. These are followed by peonies, irises and nasturtiums. And, finally, before nature goes to sleep, the hollyhocks, dahlias and September sunflowers blossom.

Later on, the artist bought a piece of land of the other side of the Chemin du Roy road which enclosed the property. On it, he had a pool built and in order to supply it with water, he had an arm of the neighbouring river, the Epte, diverted. From a print, Monet copied the model of the famous

"Japanese bridge" which he had built there and covered with wisteria, purple in spring and white in summer.

Unlike the "Clos Normand" part of the garden, this paradise of water and flowers is asymmetrical. It is inspired by the oriental tradition of the philosophical contemplation of nature. Babylonian willows with their golden branches grow on the banks of the pool and heathens, ferns, rhododendrons, red azaleas, Virginia and Japanese irises, clumps of bamboo, laburnum, Judas trees, tamarisk and rose-bushes surround it on all sides.

All the varieties of waterlilies, "the very flower of Impressionism (...), an instant in the world, a morning in the eyes, the surprising flower of a summer dawn" (for the poet Gaston Bachelard), blossom on the water. In this living studio, Monet soaks up the subtle play of water and light. These waterlilies, which he recreates, forecast abstract art and make him famous. Today, these big water compositions decorate the

"Orangerie" in the Tuilleries Gardens in Paris and are arranged according to indications provided by the artist.

Inside the house, everything is in its place, just like in the artist's lifetime. In the dining-room, the yellows of the walls and the furniture dominate in a sunny atmosphere, highlighted by lines of the wall-tiles and crockery and the famous prints of the painter who contributed to setting the taste for things Japanese, at the time.

In the bedroom on the first floor, he hung the pictures of his favourite painters, Manet, Degas, Delacroix, Pissarro, Vuillard, Cézanne and Renoir, including the portrait of Madame Monet reading the newspaper. There is no Van Gogh or Gauguin. He hated the former and did not understand the latter.

In the setting, Claude Monet passed away Dec. 5, 1926. But, for the visitor to Giverny, he still lives. You feel you might just glimpse him round a bend in a path, just as he is shown on photographs from the period.

— L'Actualité En France.



Monet in his garden in Giverny

Freud musical — dreams, but no Sigmund

By Meriel Beattie

VIENNA (R) — Freud can be family fun.

So says British songwriter Eric Wolfson, whose multi-million dollar musical Freudiana has opened here to mixed reviews.

The show attempts to turn the world of psychoanalysis into commercial family entertainment.

Wolfson, who collaborated with Austrian director Peter Weck and British record producer Alan Parsons, said he hoped to debunk some of the

mystique surrounding Sigmund Freud's work.

"I think that for far too long psychoanalysis has been talked about in hushed tones," he said. "I personally wish that when I was younger I had been exposed to some of the straightforward common sense of analytic thought."

Critics had warned that psychoanalysis was too intellectually demanding to have commercial appeal.

But Wolfson, who began work on the musical five years ago, said: "Inadvertent-

ly people will learn. But first and foremost this is an entertainment and I would say that if you wanted to see just a musical extravaganza, that's what it is."

"But if you want to look a little closer at it and at yourself then you can find out things about yourself in the mirror that is 'Freudiana'."

Despite the title, theatre-goers who expect a singing, tap-dancing Sigmund Freud to shuffle across the stage will be disappointed.

The only glimpse of the great Freud himself is a

stooping, bearded shadow behind a screen.

The show's hero is Eric, a listless young American who visits the Freud Museum in London on a guided tour and gets locked in the study by mistake.

Eric falls asleep on Freud's couch — the rug-covered bolsters where his patients related their dreams — and is transported into a fantasy world in which he is confronted by characters from Freud's most famous cases.

"Eric doesn't have deep knowledge of Freud," but

even without this, through the fantasy he begins to understand something of himself," Wolfson said.

The choice of Vienna for last month's premiere of Freudiana has been welcomed as a sign of hope. The city's own musical traditions have been threatened in recent years by the popularity of German translations of imports including Cats, the Phantom of the Opera and Les Misérables.

An appreciative premiere audience gasped and clapped as giant mirrors tilted to re-

veal writing dancers and living statues, phallic cacti sprouted from the stage floor and trapdoors yawned to convert the stage into a London underground station.

"Feel ready for the couch?" If you do, dare yourself to go to the Theatre An Der Wien, to the sensational trip to the land of dreams and nightmares," said the tabloid Kronenzeitung.

But the popular Kurier had little good to say, describing it as "a visually impressive show without plot, meaning or music."

The Vienna daily Standard scoffed that the normal of the show was that the only way to achieve inner peace and discover one's identity was to strangle one's father.

Some of the audience were confused.

"The music and the show were really entertaining, but it was also irritating," said publisher Diethold Schaar, 26. "I couldn't really understand what it was about."

According to Wolfson, a number of psychoanalysts are worried that the show might

trivialise their profession.

"There is one line in a comedy song, for example, which refers to psychoanalysts asking for 'money I could ill afford to pay'."

"So some analysts have taken this line to mean a great attack on the analytic profession for overcharging — which it absolutely is not," Wolfson said.

"But perhaps," he added with a smile, "they are analysing some simple statements too much."

Barrel-organ fans delighted by an unexpected revival of interest

By Eberhard Wiese

At the turn of the century about 10,000 people in Germany played the barrel-organ for a living. Statistics show that there were 3,000 in Berlin alone.

There are probably less than a dozen or so "professionals" who earn their daily bread in this way today.

But an impressive 600 amateurs of both sexes are members of the friends of the barrel-organ club.

They come from 12 countries and play at society and family gatherings, at street festivals and Christmas fairs, when businesses are opened and events are held to celebrate "the good old days."

Club chairman Wilfried Hömmerich said in Bonn: "The barrel-organ is experiencing a renaissance, which did not seem at all possible just a few years ago."

He said that "only 10 years ago we were driven out of towns. We are now being courted by city councils, trade and tourist associations."

At the end of the 1960s hurdy-gurdymen seemed to have had it. LP records, cassettes and amplification equipment made the barrel-organ, and the large organs played at fairs and concerts, unfashionable.

Many instruments ended up on a rubbish dump or were used for fire-wood. But some did survive, often damaged, in attics, cellars or storerooms.

This being so, it was a stroke of luck that barrel-organ fans found ways and means of bringing this decline to an end.

As the result of an advertisement placed in the show-

men's magazine Komet, 12 men met in a pub near Hanover central station on 25 January 1969 to establish The Friends of the Barrel-Organ Club.

According to the club's statutes its aims were "to increase public interest in the barrel-organ, knowledge about it and its cultural-historical significance, and in so doing make a contribution to national education."

The German Postal Authorities recently issued a special postage stamp com-

memorating 200 years of the barrel-organ. Its history goes back a long way.

The oldest barrel-organ in existence is at Salzburg Castle. It was built in 1598 and has a wooden barrel two metres long. It is fitted with brass pegs and bridges. It is a predecessor of the large organs built for fairs and concerts.

The first portable instruments originated in France, perhaps in Italy and possibly also in Germany. No-one knows for certain.

In 1750 a serinette, a small

barrel-organ for training songbirds, came to light at Mirecourt. The word "serinette" comes from the French for canary, serin.

This instrument was the size of a cigar box and songbirds were taught to sing by the continuous repetition of a melody.

Another trail led to Italy, to Modena, as the place of origin of the barrel-organ. It has been said that a certain Giovanni Barberi, who lived in Modena around 1700, was the inventor of the instrument.

There is also some evidence that the barrel-organ was manufactured in the Black Forest and in neighbouring Switzerland.

It will always be a mystery whether the strange name Orgue de Barbarie, the French for a barrel- or street-organ, is a play on Giovanni Barberi's name or an allusion to the foreign origins of the instrument for the French.

The Silesian War between Prussia and Austria had a lot to do with the spread of the popularity of the barrel-organ in Germany and Austria. Many soldiers were invalided home and were given the privilege of playing the barrel-organ by the Prussian monarch, so long as they were not school-teachers.

Empress Maria Theresa of Austria gave her war veterans a similar privilege: she fitted them out with a barrel-organ instead of a pension. In Vienna these men were speedily named "Werkel-männer" or "organ grinders."

Regular manufacture of barrel-organs began in 1790. Berlin became a centre for their construction. Waldkirch in the Black Forest was another town where this in-

dustrial flourished. Waldkirch specialised in building large organs for fairs and concerts.

All barrel-organs operate on the same principles. The central feature of the organ is a wooden cylinder. This is furnished with pegs or staples which, when the cylinder is revolved opens a series of valves to admit the air to a set of pipes, made either of pewter or wood, and this produces the sounds.

To produce eight melodies, each lasting 68 seconds, about 20,000 pegs or staples have to be fitted into a poplar-wood cylinder.

Instead of the cylinder with all its pegs, which involved a lot of work and was as a consequence expensive, punched tape was later used.

This principle was first used for a barrel-organ by a Frenchman named Gavioli in 1885, using a principle discovered in 1805 by his fellow-countryman, Joseph-Marie Jacquard, a silk-weaver, to store his weaving patterns.

The advantages are obvious. Paper tapes were faster, they included a greater selection of melodies and were cheaper than the traditional cylinder. At first the punched tape was scanned by tiny pegs when engaged in the punched holes mechanically. Then Ruth & Sohn, barrel-organ builders in Waldkirch, and Gebrüder Bruder improved on this method by piercing the holes in the punch card with air, pneumatically. By this new method tapes of notes could be prepared on paper.

Tape-control of barrel-organs has been a manufacturers' feature for several decades. Modern electronics have been used to make the latest improvements. In new



Children pose for the photographer with pint-sized hurdy gurdies in front of a king-sized funfair barrel-organ.

barrel-organs produced by a firm in Göttingen, there are no more cylinders and tapes recorded pneumatically: the sound is produced by microchips.

Ballad and street singers played a special role in the history of the barrel-organ in the 19th century, for they "gave out the news" from all over the world to the accompaniment of the music coming from the instrument.

They acted as providers of knowledge, entertainers and opinion formers.

Composers of the day knew that they had to thank organ grinders almost exclusively for the popularisation of their melodies.

But the crank on the barrel-organ had its snags. At first sight it seems easy to operate the barrel-organ, but the technique has to be learned and practised.

The movement of the crank has to be constantly altered and adjusted to the melody. It can so happen that in just one turn of the crank three different speeds and a pause are necessary. This is why melodies sound differently from player to player.

There is more legend than

truth in the story that an Italian organ grinder who caught a glimpse of Richard Wagner and, with a fine business sense, swiftly changed the cylinder on his barrel-organ to play the Bridal March from Lohengrin — too quickly for the master's sensitive ears.

The story goes that Wagner took over the offending instrument and began to play it himself at the correct tempo.

The next day the organ-grinder was to be seen with a notice which read: "Pupil of Richard Wagner."

Playing the barrel-organ has now been revived. There are regular meetings of the club in Berlin and Hanover, as well as in Waldkirch in the Black Forest and other locations, keeping the club members together.

There was a record number of participants, 300, at the barrel-organ club meeting in Berlin this year, and this has duly appeared as an entry in the Guinness Book of Records.

The best performance for playing a barrel-organ has been put in by Rolf Becker from Berlin. He played his barrel-organ for 48 hours.

Playing the barrel-organ is not a cheap hobby. Good, well-preserved, old instruments cannot be purchased for less than DM40,000. Instruments in tip-top condition are bought by enthusiasts for many times that figure.

Due to the barrel-organ boom, which started at the beginning of the 1970s, the guild of barrel-organ builders has come into its own again. There are about 15 workshops building organs in Germany at the present.

About 2,000 barrel-organs are manufactured annually at prices ranging from DM3,500 to DM45,000.

Club chairman Wilfried Hömmerich is delighted at the increasing number of barrel-organ fans from the former GDR who are applying for membership of the club. He is also delighted that there are more and more barrel-organ festivals.

Enthusiasm for the instrument is to be found in all sectors of society. His card index includes the names of doctors, lawyers, insurance executives, managers, skilled workers, not to mention one or two well-known characters — Hansi and Gertie Allgemeine.

LETTERS

Dreams vs reality

To the Editor:

Abdullah Hasanat and Sawsan Darwazah can postulate about relative truth and about men who live by dreams (Jordan Times Jan. 5, 1991). But this can only have devotees in the West. Thank God that we, in this part of the world know the absolute truth and the meaning of life. We do not live by dreams, but are totally aware from where we come and to where we go. If Mr. Hasanat has some doubts, I suggest that he keep them to himself.

Haith Tufic,
University of Jordan.

Go home, America!

I was always impressed by America, and by the American achievements in science and technology. I thought that humanity in our modern times owed the United States a great deal for the prosperity and advancement people had seen since the turn of the 20th century.

Millions of inventions and explorations have helped shape the world we live in today and most of them carry the label "Made in USA."

America has set trends in the modern life. Until now I think that many American people are wonderful in person. But all of this can not and did not change my opposition towards American politics, as an Arab, and a member of the world's southern population.

American human and social values do not prevail even on their own soil. Rosy ideas like justice and equality were lacking among white Americans and their fellow blacks especially in the 50s. Perhaps until today blacks and other minorities cannot share whites in the viewing of the American dream in full colour.

Even the American constitution, a grand source of American pride, is like the Roman justice. It applies for Romans only.

I find it hard to imagine what Vietnamese people think of the American constitution which in theory applies for all mankind.

Alas, the great American success in physics and maths was not the same in social science and politics. There America faced failure and fiasco. Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Panama and the Gulf crisis, of course, are only a few examples of how the American foreign policy viewed the globe and how it reacted towards the rights and freedoms of other nations to choose.

Uncle Sam got A+ in technology, but he failed all the rest! I don't believe, with this long list of ugly interventions in mind, that the bloody aggression on Iraq will be an exception. I know this rule has not been broken yet. It is regrettable and unforgivable for a world leader and superpower to gamble with the destiny of nations.

America should learn from the lessons of the past not to interfere in local disputes. No justifications are accepted, even that of the new world order. America cannot start a new era with a blood bath.

I find it more convenient to believe that the forces in the Gulf are forces of occupation rather than liberation. And that America is sliding into a very serious, mysterious and costly gamble. The war in the Arabian desert is a complicated one. Once you get in there is no easy way out. The declaration of war and rising oil prices will not help America's ailing economy.

Now in these volatile moments charged with fear, hope, hate and anger, international atmosphere is just right for World War III once the merciless mercenaries ignite it.

President George Bush knows very well that his lust for war was not shared by other participants in the international force. No one else was enthusiastic about making a full scale devastating and endless war. He knows he can't induce and seduce their capacity for long, so he is trying to win a quick and clean battle. Thus he sacrificed the glory of his country making his decision under political pressures and misleading calculations, and rushing into the sands of Arabia risking the burial of his pride six feet under forever, and for what? A few barrels of oil.

When he said: "This will not be another Vietnam," I almost imagined him adding: read my lips!

If the politicians of Europe were wise they would realise, more than anybody else, that clock hands never turn backwards. They would teach young America the lesson carefully, and convince it to withdraw. The wise guys avoid learning the hard way.

The so called coalition front is nothing but a mangle of unwanted guests for an unpleasant party. The brittle support which temporarily looks solid will soon break when the real challenge begins.

America will be then left in the battle field to face the unknown. Europe soon will sign a treaty with the Arab Muslims to avoid future wars, for Europe stands on the front line with Arabs and she cannot afford the risk the U.S.A. is making. They

know that foul play produces foul results.

No one wants war. Even President Saddam said this war is unwanted. This had been clearly stated in his speeches, and frankly signalled to the American policy makers through various channels to avert possible military confrontation. These declarations were neglected. Israel from their side kept the climate hot and ready for explosion. Many implications were delivered to the Americans about Israel's military capabilities and its readiness to make a preemptive strike against Iraq. And from the American side there had been confirmation that the challenge to Iraq will continue and that no chickening out is planned.

The Israeli motivation was to release or divert some of the exerted pressures on them to sit and achieved negotiated fair settlement with one or more Arab factions. Currently, America wants to preserve Israeli existence as a strategic ally and powerful tool in America's hands adding insult to injury in the Arab World.

The fumes of conspiracy were filling the air in the Middle East long before America started its aggression.

But America will learn from now on that large troops in the Gulf do not serve its goals in the region or the world. Such escalation of military presence and operations will not help to build new orders. This practice is a potential threat to the American leadership, respect and credibility, not among the people of the South alone but also by traditional allies.

The Muslim World will not forgive hasty American actions in the holy lands of Arabia. It will only trigger more severe unpredictable explosions in the area that were backlashes against the American and Western presence throughout the Muslim World starting with the Middle East.

As war escalates in the Gulf it continues to be a no-win game for all. But America remains a final loser. High risk is involved in all moves. No short or safe battle is granted, and the massacre is certain. The holocaust will spread and reach new fronts as America opened the holy land to the forbidden gates of hell. From now on, there will only be blood, fire and smoke. Tears will boil and vanish in the inferno. Coffins and black plastic bags will hardly find someone alive to use them for the dead. Agony and suffering will be beyond the wildest imaginations.

America is dying to defend and protect the cash cows of oil and arms!

With this address I carry no intentions to humiliate or threaten the American political establishment or American friends, the way American politicians do when they have dialogue with other nations. I am emphasising only the importance of listening to reason before it is late.

America should keep its grip on technology and discard the role of international policeman, for America may win one small battle of geography in our desert, but will definitely lose a whole war of history.

M. Zuhbi,
Amman.

A letter to the allies

I AM writing in my capacity as a mother who is able to feel with children from both sides of the war in the Gulf regardless of their religion or culture. Do you (the leaders of the member-nations of the allied forces) really believe that what you are doing in the Middle East is fair? Are the words: human rights, democracy, equality and freedom just words used in speeches only? Or are your souls blinded by your interests so you look down at our culture and people? Do any of you have children participating in this war? Don't you feel with all those mothers whose children you sent to hell? Or with the wives who see you sacrificing their beloved for your own selfish interests? You are seeding hatred and hostilities between brothers and between the peoples of East and West for generations to come. I do not know how you have the courage to give the people of your nations so many lies about the war, how will you have the courage to face Almighty God with what you have done when the day of reckoning comes. Yes, man is great, but God is greater, this is what Allah Akbar means. We repeat it to remind ourselves not to go beyond ourselves as humans. We are not criminals led by a mad man as you are trying to convince yourselves. We are just human beings exactly like you. But we are part of a different culture which you feel should remain under your tyranny and hegemony and never be allowed the choice of its own leaders unless they are agents you employ in the region. If you want our oil, it is for sale.

Where is your integrity as great nations of the West? Politicians who want to use science for destruction of mankind should be asked to withdraw your children and send them back to their warm homes where they belong. We want to be left alone to solve our own internal problems. Send us instead your philosophers, intellectuals and scientists. Allow East and West to live in peace and cooperate for the benefit of all mankind, not its destruction.

Semira Bouran,
Amman.

Turkey

(Continued from page 1)

of the war effort as bases in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf.

"The forces (at Incirlik) perform the same function as those allied forces taking part in the operation in the south," Marat

Sungar told reporters in Ankara. "Military operations here are no different from those in the south."

An Iranian envoy visited Ankara Monday to ask Turkey to distance itself from the conflict. Tehran newspaper have said Turkey covets the oil-rich Iraqi provinces of Kirkuk and Mosul.

Soviet ambassador to Turkey Albert Chermishev said Moscow wanted to contain the Gulf war and find a political solution.

"The aim of war is not destroying Iraq (but) ensuring an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait," he was quoted as saying.

"We see the events reaching tragic levels," he told the Liberal

Turkish daily Milliyet. "We favour the war being localised. It should be prevented from spreading."

On the use of Turkish bases by the United States, he said: "The use of bases in addition to other possibilities create a certain additional element for the current tension in the Gulf."

Barrage

(Continued from page 1)

million men entrenched in and near Kuwait, facing a similar number of allied troops deployed in Saudi Arabia.

Iraq's media said enemy bombardments had not broken the nation's will and it was using some enemy missiles, which failed to explode, in counterattacks.

"Despite the thousands of aerial sorties and the missile attacks, the Iraqis will have remained unbroken and the Iraqi resistance is unwavering," Baghdad Radio said in a commentary.

It said the enemy's vaunted aircraft and cruise missiles had been turned into "mundane matters that can be tackled and dealt with militarily."

The Pentagon's top military officer said Wednesday that allied bombing raids in the Gulf war had completely destroyed two Iraqi nuclear reactors.

"I think I can confirm for you that the two operational reactors they had are both down. They're gone. They're finished," General Colin Powell, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters.

Gen. Powell told reporters that another Iraqi nuclear reactor hit by the Israeli air force nearly a decade ago was still out of commission.

He said that other attacks on Iraq's chemical and biological weapons ability had been aimed chiefly at production facilities. But he stressed that weapons already produced had been dispersed to perhaps hundreds of Iraqi bunkers with Baghdad's military forces.

U.S. and British officials have said Iraq's nuclear and chemical weapons capability has been a major focus of the early allied air campaign in the Gulf war.

Iranian television said Wednesday that Iraq reported that it launched a surprise attack Tuesday night across the Saudi-Kuwait border and occupied some Saudi territory.

A U.S. spokesman said two U.S. soldiers were wounded and six Iraqi soldiers were captured during a skirmish in Saudi Arabia that happened within the last 24 hours. He said the wounded Americans were treated and returned to duty.

He told a military briefing in Riyadh that there has been continuing sporadic artillery fire between ground troops on the border, and that a regiment of the 3rd armoured cavalry exchanged fire with an Iraqi patrol.

He said he had no information on a report by Iran's Islamic Republic News Agency that some allied soldiers had been captured by the Iraqis.

Iranian Television said that Baghdad's Voice of the People radio reported that allied forces retreated under heavy fire from artillery and helicopters.

IRNA said earlier that Iraqi ground forces had launched an attack against allied troops in Saudi Arabia early Wednesday morning.

IRNA said it had confirmed "reports from Iraq" that Iraqi forces have occupied Saudi territory on the border and have captured a group of allied soldiers near the Saudi-Kuwait border.

A military communiqué broadcast by Iraqi Radio also said Iraqi missiles Tuesday set fire to a Saudi oil complex and hit the Saudi city of Dhahran and the nearby allied air base. It also said Iraqi missiles hit Riyadh and the Saudi city of Jubail Monday.

"For the sake of Palestine... and in revenge for the crimes of Zionism, our missiles slammed against the city of Tel Aviv, the city of vice and usurpation, to disturb the sleep of the Zionists and blacken their night after they distorted the days of the Arabs and filled them with blood and peril," the communiqué said.

Iraqi Radio in a later commentary said that the U.S. Patriot anti-missile rockets deployed in Israel had failed to intercept Iraq's Al Hussein missile, a modified Scud. "The reason for this is that the superior creativity of the Iraqi mind was a component in the manufacture of these missiles. In addition, our missiles have the protection of God, for they bear the names of our ancestors," the radio said.

IRNA said that allied warplanes also pounded the Iraqi port city of Basra and the nearby Fao oil centre Wednesday morning. The agency said the sounds of explosions and anti-aircraft fire could be heard clearly in the Iranian city of Khorramshahr, 40 kilometres southeast of Basra.

Basra is the site of the Iraq's military headquarters for the Kuwait theatre.

Iraq's Oil Ministry, in an announcement read over the radio, said that it was suspending the sales of gasoline "for a short period" as of Wednesday.

The report suggested official concern about fuel supplies in the wake of the allied air attacks.

"We request everyone's full cooperation in the service of our dear country," the ministry said in its announcement.

Mr. Cheney said the allied battle plan was to move cautiously in order to hold down military casualties while at the same time moving towards pushing Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

"Yesterday I noticed a newspaper headline which said 'war drags on,'" said Mr. Cheney. "I want to caution you again that it (daily war progress) cannot be scored like a college track meet or a basketball tournament."

"You don't really know you're doing against an army until it tries to perform its function," Gen. Powell said. He said the Iraqi army in the field "is for the most part sitting there waiting to be attacked, and attacked it will be."

In his comments in Washington, Gen. Powell said cloudy weather over Iraq and Kuwait had been worse than expected in recent days but that allied air attacks had achieved air superiority in the skies over both Iraq and Kuwait.

Both Secretary of State Dick Cheney and Powell suggested that the United States and its allies were not ready to send ground forces into Kuwait.

Gen. Powell said Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is a man who would use "any means at his disposal" to strike back and try to break up the allied coalition.

He added: "there may well be surprises ahead for us," including what he described as possible Iraqi air strikes and additional missile attacks.

Both Mr. Cheney and Gen. Powell conceded that knocking out Iraq's mobile Scud missile launchers was proving more difficult than anticipated.

Israel

(Continued from page 1)

The Iraqi missile attack Tuesday evening caused fatal heart attacks in three elderly people and injured more than 70 people, the army said. However, Israel Radio reported 96 people were hurt. Hospital officials said 10 of the injured were children under 12.

"We are going to respond even if there's not a single other casualty," Mr. Arens told the CNN interviewer in Tel Aviv. "If you want details of the

timing you know you're not going to get it," he said, indicating the retaliation might be delayed or moderated because of U.S. pleas for restraint.

"We have to take into consideration your (America's) concerns and we are doing that," said Mr. Arens, one of only three people in the government authorised to comment on Israel's response to the Iraqi attacks.

"Shamir has asked ministers not to be interviewed about the missile attacks on Israel," Israeli Radio said after ministers and military chiefs ended the emergency session.

"In consultations with ministers this morning, it was decided that Mr. Shamir, the defence minister and the foreign minister would make statements on the subject to ensure there would be a unified government message," it said.

President Bush Wednesday condemned Iraq for its attacks on Israel and thanked the Jewish state for its "continued restraint," as optimism began giving way to unease in Washington over the war with Iraq.

In midnight telephone call to Mr. Shamir, Mr. Bush "expressed his outrage at this unprovoked aggression and extended his sympathy to the prime minister over the numerous casualties the attack caused," spokesman Martin Fitzwater said.

The Israeli army said two Patriots were fired at the incoming Scud attack on Israel without success.

The army did not say how many Scuds had been fired.

"They did not hit," said Nachman Shai, the army spokesman.

"They will hit the next time I hope, if there is (one)," Tuesday was the first day that the people of Tel Aviv had been told return to work since the war started, and shops, department stores and restaurants had opened, though almost everyone carried a gas mask.

Airman

(Continued from page 1)

vowed to send POWs to targets that might come under attack by the U.S.-led allies.

Iraq said that it has captured more than 20 pilots since the air campaign was launched to push Iraq out of Iraq. The allies list 24 airmen missing in action.

Iraq says it has downed more than 186 "air targets," including aircraft and missiles, since Thursday. The allies say they have lost 19 aircraft.

The United States and other western governments have called Iraq's threat to hold the POWs as deterrent a "war crime," and urged Baghdad to

abide by international conventions.

But the Iraqis said Tuesday they would abide by the Geneva conventions related to POWs. Israel also applied the same principles to Palestinians under occupation.

A spokesman for President Saddam Hussein issued a statement Tuesday saying "imperialist ambitions and Zionist intrigues" created a double standard on POWs. Baghdad Radio reported.

"Politicians in the West consider their citizens to be of a higher calibre than any other citizen... especially if such a citizen is an Arab or a Muslim," the statement said.

It said Israeli treatment of prisoners had been ignored since the 1948 war that created the Jewish state.

"Iraq is prepared to deal with the POWs on the basis of the Geneva agreements provided the same is applied to the people of Palestine people in the occupied territories," it said.

The statement said the Geneva convention should also apply anyone taken prisoners while fighting for a Palestinian homeland and Iraqis and other taken prisoners in the Gulf war.

"Failing that, we will be under no obligation."

The statement accused the West of putting its oil interests ahead of the plight of the Palestinian people.

It said the West had failed to apply the Geneva convention to the Palestinian people.

Oil blaze

(Continued from page 1)

Wednesday, but the Kuwaiti information centre in Cairo, Egypt, said the fires at Shuaiba had burned out.

The storage tanks at the industrial centres may not prove such a problem, said Kuwaiti oil experts. They argued that the tanks there store cleaner inflammable products and the tanks are surrounded by good fireproof fences.

"The tanks would burn out their contents within a week," said one expert, noting that each tank contains up to 30,000 tons of products.

Repairs to the wells could take months, and could cost as much as \$20 million. The wells could be capped, but they could also be snuffed out with explosives.

Walter McKenzie, regional principal surveyor for London's Salvage Association, said that if only blazing oil is jettisoning out of wellheads "then the military could probably extinguish the fires, by means of explosive, i.e. bombs."



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Jordan Times

Baker hints U.S.-Soviet summit may proceed

Gorbachev says his top task is to seek calm in Baltic republics

MOSCOW (Agencies) — President Mikhail Gorbachev says his main task is to achieve calm in the Baltics, but that the independence-seeking republics must repeal all laws that conflict with the Soviet constitution.

The Latvian leadership Tuesday said Gorbachev agreed not to impose direct Kremlin rule. But scepticism remained three days after Soviet forces seized Latvia's police headquarters in an assault that left six people dead, and 10 days after a similar crackdown in neighbouring Lithuania that left 14 dead.

Barriers blocked public buildings in all three Baltic republics against possible attacks.

The crackdown threatened to derail next month's U.S.-Soviet summit and jeopardise foreign efforts to help rescue the country's sliding economy. Several foreign governments, including the United States, considered cutting aid to Moscow.

In Washington, Congress was considering a resolution Wednesday chastising Gorbachev for the recent repression in Lithuania.

Latvian Radio reported Wednesday that the republic will mark a day of mourning Friday, the day of the funerals for those killed when Soviet "black heret" police stormed the Latvian Interior Ministry building.

Gorbachev, speaking to a news conference Tuesday, denied responsibility for the violent crackdown in the Baltics.

"I see my main task in not allowing an escalation and struggle, to normalise the situation, to achieve accord and cooperation," Gorbachev said.

The Soviet president insisted that the "anti-constitutional" laws and decrees of the Baltic parliaments and governments "most of all those which violate human rights" must be repealed.

In a calm and stern voice, Gorbachev denied any backtracking on his policies of openness and economic reform that once won him strong support in the West.

"I decisively reject any speculation, all suspicions and slanders on this score," said Gorbachev, who won the Nobel Prize last year. "Neither domestic nor foreign policy has changed."

Latvian President Anatolijs Gorbunovs met for several hours Tuesday with Gorbachev in Moscow to discuss the Soviet military crackdown.

The Latvian president said Gorbachev agreed presidential rule was not necessary now in the republic. Gorbachev's powerful office allows him to impose direct rule in any of the 15 Soviet republics, meaning he could disband local parliaments and take other drastic steps.

But Gorbunovs also said the Soviet leader offered no concrete proposals on how to solve the conflict between pro-independence and pro-Kremlin forces in Latvia.

A Latvian lawmaker expressed scepticism Tuesday that Gorbachev would be able to prevent further bloodshed. Andrejs Krastins, deputy chairman of the Latvian Supreme Council legislature, said it was too early to say whether Gorbachev could control the military.

"It is very difficult to react to Mr. Gorbachev's speech because we know actions are not in line with the speeches of the president," he said. "Very often after speeches, the army and others do quite the opposite."

The Kremlin has been pressuring the Baltics to nullify the independence declarations passed last year by the democratically elected parliaments.

The United States has never

recognised the forcible incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia into the Soviet Union in 1940. All three Baltic republics were independent states between the wars.

The freely elected governments of the Baltics have shown no sign of backing away from their goal of breaking free from Moscow and they maintain laws passed by their parliaments are valid.

Gorbachev is faced with increasingly restive republics throughout the country. All 15 republics have declared some form of sovereignty.

In Washington, Secretary of State James Baker hinted Tuesday that the United States may proceed with a U.S.-Soviet summit planned for next month in order to get a treaty slashing strategic nuclear weapons despite Moscow's crackdown on the Baltics.

Posing for photographers with three Baltic leaders, Baker was asked when a decision might come on the summit, which President George Bush has threatened to cancel because of the recent Soviet military crackdown against pro-independence forces in the Baltic republics.

Baker said the violence could jeopardise "tremendous progress" the two countries made in improving ties and urged a political settlement with the Baltics. Nevertheless, he told reporters: "I might just say here that with respect to arms control, it's important to move that process forward."

He added: "With respect to a summit, we will be discussing this internally, and as well with the Soviet Union."

His spokeswoman, Margaret Tutwiler, earlier said the superpower meeting was still "up in the air."

Baker believes that despite tensions over the Baltics and other matters, continued work on arms

control is in both countries' mutual advantage, a senior aide said recently.

U.S. and Soviet arms negotiators opened talks Monday aimed at resolving differences on an already-signed treaty reducing Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) and completing the strategic pact, known as START, which is due to be signed at the summit, set for Moscow on Feb. 11-13.

The negotiators met again Tuesday and U.S. officials said the talks may last all week.

Meanwhile, the United States announced it was joining other countries in formally demanding that the Soviet Union explain to the 34-nation European Security body its violent crackdown against pro-independence forces in the Baltics.

Tutwiler said Washington was acting "in response to what we view as serious violations of the Soviet government's human dimension commitments under various CSCE documents."

She referred to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), an organisation Moscow has wanted to assume a greater role following the end of the cold war.

The Bush administration has been considering retaliation for Soviet military moves in the Baltics, but so far this is the only step to have been announced.

It was not immediately clear what effect this demand might have on the repression in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

Tutwiler renewed U.S. criticism of Moscow condemning "all intimidation and use of force in the Baltic states."

She said Baker would convey the administration's "strong support for the freely and democratically elected governments in the three states" in his meeting with the Baltic leaders.

105,000 Pakistanis sign for Jihad

KARACHI, Pakistan (R) — A leading Pakistani politician and Islamic scholar has said 105,000 men had signed up as volunteers for a Jihad (holy war) against the U.S.-led multinational forces fighting Iraq.

"The main function of the holy warriors will be to protect holy places in Iraq," said Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani, president of the Jamiat-I-Ulema-I-Pakistan (JUP) Party.

No independent confirmation of his claim was immediately available. The JUP said earlier it would recruit only 25,000 volunteers to fight for Iraq.

Islamabad has sent 11,000 troops to help defend Saudi Arabia but the allied bombing of Iraq is deeply unpopular in Pakistan.

Pro-Iraqi protests have brought thousands of Pakistanis onto the streets in daily demonstrations.

Noorani said the JUP had written to President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif urging them to allow the volunteers to go to Iraq through Iran.

"We have also requested Iran to allow warriors to pass through its territory," he said.

Earlier Tuesday, Sharif left Islamabad on a Gulf peace mission, saying the Muslim World was deeply upset at a war which benefited only Israel.

Speaking to reporters before leaving for Tehran, the first stop of his four or five-day trip, he said the war could be halted only if

Iraq pulled out of Kuwait.

His mission was to stop hostilities and save both the Iraqi people and the Muslim World from more destruction, he told the independent Pakistan Press International (PPI) news agency.

After Iran, Sharif plans to visit Turkey and may go on to Egypt, Syria, Jordan and possibly Saudi Arabia.

Before the war began, Iran, Turkey and Pakistan jointly called for an urgent meeting of the 46-nation Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said Monday 10 countries had accepted the idea but it needed the support of two-thirds of the OIC.

Bangladeshis overwhelmed by politicians ahead of elections

By Anis Ahmad

Reuter

DHAKA — Bangladeshis say they are overwhelmed by the unusual zeal and the sympathetic approach of politicians drumming up votes for Feb. 27 parliamentary elections.

"What shall we do? Giving or keeping your word has become a serious problem," said housewife Salma Begum, bewildered by the number of people approaching her for her vote. "Each of them appears to be so nice."

Her neighbour in a government employees' housing area was equally confused. "They come and talk like relatives, intimately asking if my children are well or how they fared in the annual examinations."

A more serious problem troubled 50-year-old Abul Kalam. "How can I say 'no'?" he asked. "So I'm telling anyone begging for my vote that I'm with him."

"This is against my principles and religion. But I am helpless."

The February elections were called by acting President Shabazzuddin Ahmad, who took over on Dec. 6 from ousted President Hossain Mohammad Ershad.

He is in police detention charged with misuse of power and embezzling public money.

Former Vice-President Mondul Ahmad and two senior ex-ministers are also in custody but other leaders of Ershad's Jatiya Party say they will contest the polls and will announce a list of candidates shortly.

The other three main parties have all announced most of their candidates for the 300-seat parliament.



The Awami League, led by Sheikh Hasina, has announced 297 candidates and has chosen a boat as its election symbol.

Her main rival for power, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party led by Begum Khaleda Zia, has named 292 candidates and has chosen a sheaf of rice as its symbol.

Illiteracy is widespread in Bangladesh and symbols are vital if voters are to recognise which party to cast their ballot for.

The third largest party, the rightist Jamaat-E-Islami, has fielded 294 candidates and has a

set of scales as its symbol. Even before they announced their candidates, however, hectic door-to-door lobbying was under way.

Young activists were busily scribbling party names and symbols on any vacant stretch of wall before a rival party could grab the space.

"You know this city of six million people has a shortage of space. We must book some of it well in advance," one said.

"Everyone is in a hurry. This is something new to us," said Muzaffar Hossain, who has voted in all elections since 1970.

Albanian strikes end; new strike law approved

VIENNA (AP) — Drivers in the Albanian capital Tirana have ended a strike that paralysed public transport and authorities issued a decree limiting strike action, state media reported.

Drivers and maintenance workers defied an appeal from the ruling Communists and the fledgling opposition to suspend strikes until May 1 and stopped work Monday, demanding higher pay and better conditions.

Authorities ordered army trucks to secure vital services such as food supply.

But according to state TV and radio, the workers agreed to end their strike after negotiating double pay on Sundays and holidays, an Albanian journalist

reached by telephone from Vienna said. He asked not to be identified.

Strikes by transport workers in the port city of Durres and the southern town of Korca also ended, the journalist said.

A decree issued by the parliamentary presidium Tuesday would allow authorities to ban strikes in vital sectors such as medical care, food supply or transport unless continued service could be guaranteed, the Albanian News Agency (ATA) reported.

According to the decree, strikes may last no longer than one day. Workers must give 15 days notice of a planned strike

and can only walk out if a majority of the workforce agree and all their demands have not been fulfilled.

Strikes are prohibited during elections, natural disasters or if the work stoppage would have serious consequences for the economy.

The strikes have shown how difficult it is for either the communist government, discredited by 46 years of repressive rule

and isolation from the world, or the fledgling opposition to control popular discontent with the ruined economy.

Many of the country's obsolete factories are idle or working at half-pace because of the shortage of raw materials.

Communist President Ramiz Alia last week ruled out more pay rises. He spoke after thousands of striking miners won increases of up to 60 per cent.

The tank — queen of the 20th century battlefield

By Nicholas Doughty
Reuter

BRUSSELS — When allied ground forces launch their expected attack on Iraqi troops in Kuwait, both sides will rely heavily on one weapon that symbolises the firepower of 20th century combat — the tank.

Known to many as the "queen of the battlefield," it brought a breakthrough in the static trench warfare of World War I and helped Hitler conquer vast areas of Europe with a new form of fast-moving armoured strikes known as "blitzkrieg."

But, despite their power, tanks are no longer the invincible monsters they were when first used.

In the Gulf hundreds of tanks, including U.S. M-1A1s, British Challengers and Iraqi Soviet-built T-72s, are set to do battle.

Besides enemy tanks, they will be threatened by mines that explode beneath them, air attacks or anti-tank weapons fired by soldiers in foxholes.

The desert terrain is ideal for tanks, and military analysts expect them to be used in large formations.

What's it like to be packed inside 50 tonnes or so of steel when fighting starts?

"It's cramped, hotter than hell, you've got a constant whine from the engine, the vibrations are going through the soles of your feet and you're being thrown around if it's rough terrain," said one U.S. army officer with nine years of tank experience.

"You've got a radio blaring in your ear and when the gun starts firing, there's a huge kick from the gun and the turret gets full of acid smoke," he said.

Despite modern developments like laser range-finders and guns stabilised by computer, that description could almost have come from the first tank crews in World War I.

The British were the first to use tanks in action, shaped like a rhomboid, with tracks that passed around the top of its body. They had cannon or machine-guns mounted on each side of the hull.

First results in the 1916 Battle

of the Somme were patchy. But at Cambrai a year later, 378 tanks launched a mass attack on the German lines.

By the end of the day, much ground and 10,000 prisoners had been taken. The tank had proved itself as the modern equivalent of that feared 19th century weapon — cavalry.

Between the world wars, Germany revolutionised the use of tanks, organising them en masse into panzer divisions. In World War II the divisions punched huge holes in enemy lines in Poland, the Benelux countries, France and the Soviet Union. They cut off lines of supply and encircled troops.

Not everyone had realised their significance. In Poland, cavalry charged the German panzers and were cut down. Britain and France wasted tanks in small numbers as infantry support.

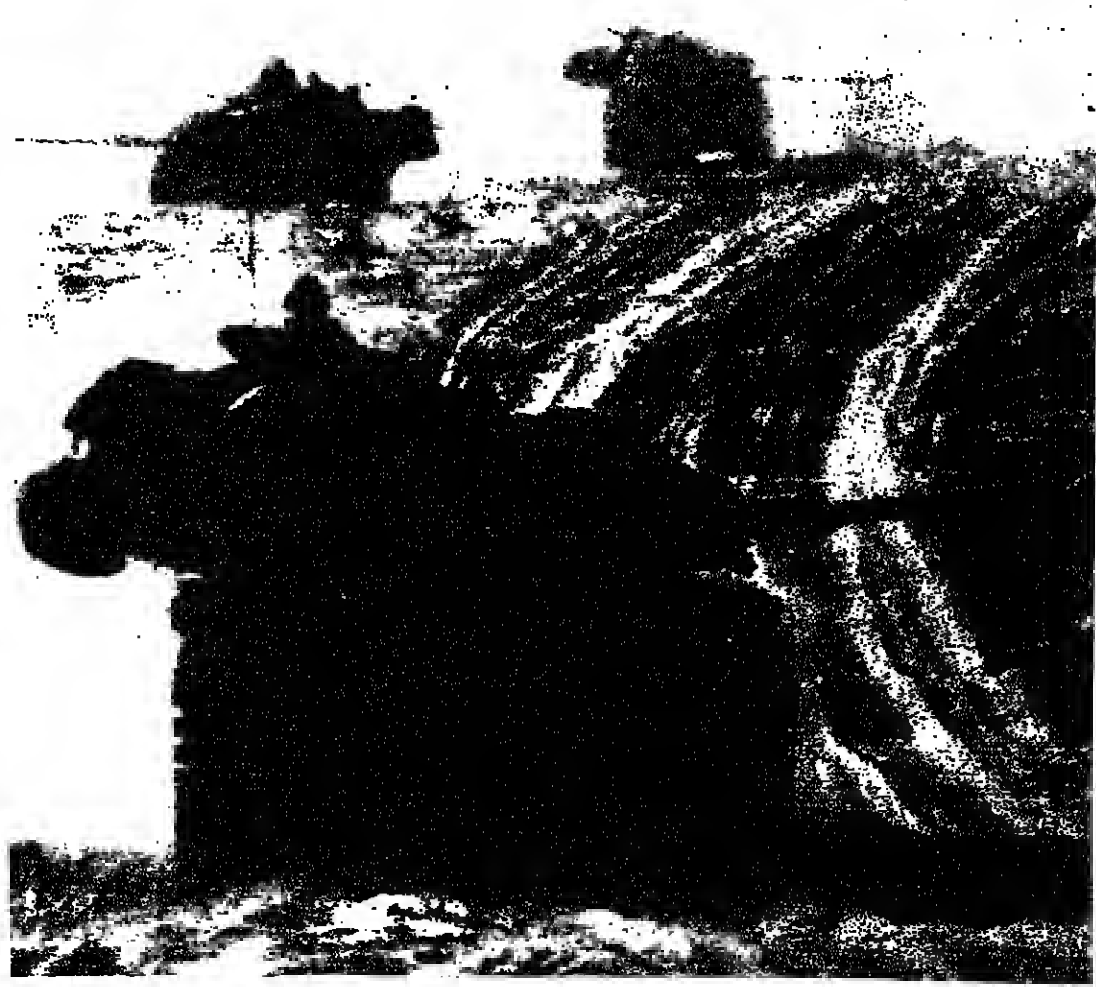
During the war tanks assumed ever greater importance. Thicker armour, greater mobility and more powerful guns appeared. Germany came up with the best designs, but even its formidable Tiger and Panther tanks were eventually overcome by allied forces that were numerically far superior.

During the cold war development continued apace — although the basic caterpillar track and turret design has not changed. The trick is to get the right balance of a speed, firepower and protection from the enemy.

Tanks no longer have trouble firing their guns when moving, at best a "hit and miss" affair during World War II. Now the guns are stabilised, often by computers, so that they stay trained on the target in all circumstances.

Laser range-finders send out a beam that bounces back from the target, allowing the gunner to hit with pinpoint accuracy. A thermal imaging system which picks out objects that give off heat, allows the crew to fight at night.

Tank crews — usually a commander, gunner, driver and loader — spend their time in combat "buttoned up," meaning that all hatches are shut. But with a



system of mirrors and periscopes they can often see a great deal of what is going on outside.

Modern tanks can also be sealed against attacks from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, allowing the crew to continue fighting.

Apart from machine-guns that can be used against infantry, they carry a large gun with a range of several kilometres. Different kinds of ammunition are used, depending on the target to be engaged.

One sort sheds its outer casing when fired and an extremely hard core, made of tungsten carbide or depleted uranium, simply punches a huge hole in an enemy

tank. Other kinds of ammunition carry high explosive charges. But the tank has many potential enemies on the battlefield and must always try to keep its front to the enemy, where its armour is thickest.

"The best antidote to a tank is another tank," said the U.S. officer. "The principle is that the guy who shoots first wins. You have to shoot within a few seconds of spotting your target."

Anti-tank helicopters and aircraft, flying low and armed with cannons and rockets, can blast holes in the top of armoured vehicles, one of their weakest points.

Finally, there is a highly complex range of anti-tank missiles used by infantry. Often light, they can penetrate very thick armour and can be carried by one man. More long-range weapons are guided by wire or computer to the target.

Tanks are major "gas-guzzlers" and need constant re-supply with fuel and ammunition to remain effective.

But the greatest fear of the crew is the "brew-up," when the tank is hit and catches fire, trapping them inside. The U.S. officer said: "At that point, your tank has just turned into a steel coffin."

China begins trial of Peking student leader

PEKING (AP) — Wang Dan, the college student who gained fame as the megaphone-waving leader of China's massive 1989 democracy movement, went on trial Wednesday after nearly 20 months in jail.

Wang is the 25th democracy activist to be tried or sentenced this month as the government seeks to wrap up the cases of the democracy movement's leaders while the world is distracted by the Gulf war.

A small notice announcing Wang's trial was posted outside the Peking Intermediate People's Court. It said he was charged with "counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement," the charge most frequently used against political prisoners.

Court officials refused to say if Wang's family was allowed to attend the trial, which was closed to the general public. Six Hong Kong University students, who arrived in Peking Monday in hopes of observing political trials visited a court office but were turned away.

Wang, now 23, was no. 1 on a police list of the 21 most-wanted student leaders after the democracy movement was crushed by an army attack on June 4, 1989. Hundreds, possibly thousands, of civilians died when the army moved in on protesters in Tiananmen Square.

Wang was arrested the following month while meeting with a Taiwanese reporter to try to flee China.

A history student at Peking University, Wang organised campus discussions on political reform even before the democracy movement began. He had studied glasnost "openness" in the Soviet Bloc and wrote an article arguing that China should take the same path.

In April 1989, when college students put up posters to mourn the death of former Communist Party leader Hu Yaobang, Wang was among the first to urge that the students channel their grief into trying to achieve change in the system. He was one of a small circle of student leaders who began organising marches to Tiananmen Square.

His short, slight figure, with a shock of hair usually falling over his glasses, often could be seen with a megaphone at the front of rallies.

As hundreds of thousands of non-students joined the protests and quarrels developed over leadership, Wang returned to the university. He was not at the square on the night of the army attack.

Thousands of people were arrested after the crackdown. Most are believed to have been sent to labour reform camps, sentenced to prison terms or released.

But the government delayed putting the leaders on trial as it pondered how to handle the most controversial cases and the inevitable international criticism that would follow.

Chinese sources say the government has drawn up a list of 20 protest leaders, including students and older intellectuals, whose trials are being carefully orchestrated.

Top judges and prosecutors were selected to handle these trials, and their statements are scripted. Defence attorneys in the cases also are required to submit their statements for approval.

Hang is the eighth person on the list to be tried so far. The other trials are expected before the Chinese new year, which falls on Feb. 15.



Tapes of songs praising Saddam Hussein seized

LYON, France (AP) — Police seized hundreds of video clips and tapes of an Arab-language song glorifying Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and demanding the multinational force get out of the Gulf, police said Tuesday. The seizures were made in connection with a judicial investigation into sales of the items by an Algerian distributor who risks being charged with provocation to crime. The song, "Z'dam ya Saddam" (Go For It, Saddam), sung by an Algerian, incites Arabs to fight the "bastards" who have "installed their armies in the Gulf to profit from the oil." Police said they seized 671 video clips of the song and 150 tapes from Ouassini Bouarfa, who edited and distributed them. Up to 100,000 tapes of the song reportedly have been sold in Algeria. It appeared in France three days before the start of the Gulf war. The investigation was opened Saturday following complaints.

Lincoln Centre creates department for jazz

NEW YORK (AP) — Lincoln Centre for the Performing Arts is creating a department of jazz, the initial step toward the anticipated establishment of a new Lincoln Centre constituent organisation devoted to jazz. Jazz trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, currently artistic director of Lincoln Centre's classical jazz series, will provide overall artistic guidance. Roh Gibson, director of both the Atlanta Jazz Festival and the Montreaux Atlanta International Music Festival, will be director of the new department. The new jazz department will present a wide range of concerts and will also develop educational programmes for children and adults, professional training opportunities for young musicians and various archival and scholarly activities.

Seles has a lot of possibilities after tennis

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — The future for 17-year-old Monica Seles is chock full of possibilities after tennis, if she can just slow down long enough to decide which to choose. "I always said I would like to change my mind every second week," said Seles, a high school 11th grader. "I like to be in front of people, so maybe I'd like to be on stage. The business that my brother is studying is pretty neat. He is the same way I am, changing his mind — maybe psychology." Seles also has a gum-chewing habit. "It's a big problem at my school because they don't allow bubble gum or jeans," Seles said.

Julia Roberts — 'every man's fantasy'

NEW YORK (AP) — Calling her "every man's fantasy," GQ magazine has put actress Julia on its cover, the first woman to appear alone on the front since the male-oriented magazine became a monthly. "We've debated — often hotly — who our first cover girl ought to be," GQ editor-in-chief Art Cooper said in a release. "But when we finally decided to do it there was no question that it would be Julia Roberts: the hottest, most riveting actress in Hollywood." The 23-year-old star of Flatliners, Pretty Woman and the soon-to-be-released Sleeping With the Enemy, appears wearing an oversized white shirt, provocatively draped. GQ became a monthly in 1981. Actress Geena Davis appeared on the cover in 1989 with then-busband Jeff Goldblum. In an accompanying article, Roberts bristles when asked about her relationships with three one-time leading men — Liam Neeson (Satisfaction), Dylan McDermott (Steel Magnolias) and present love Kiefer Sutherland (Flatliners). "My relationships happened over three years of my life, not some wild, outrageous weekend," Roberts said. "Yes, movies sometimes promote a fantasy that can be confusing, but that also comes from someone whose life is already confused. And I've been in that situation. But at this point, my life is very clear."